



A TRUE
VISION
of LIFE

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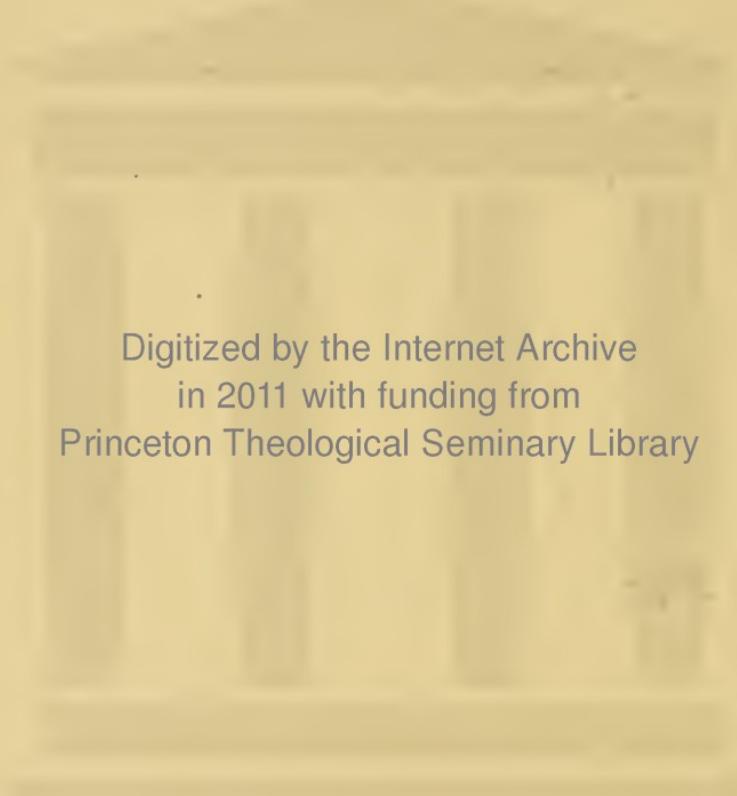
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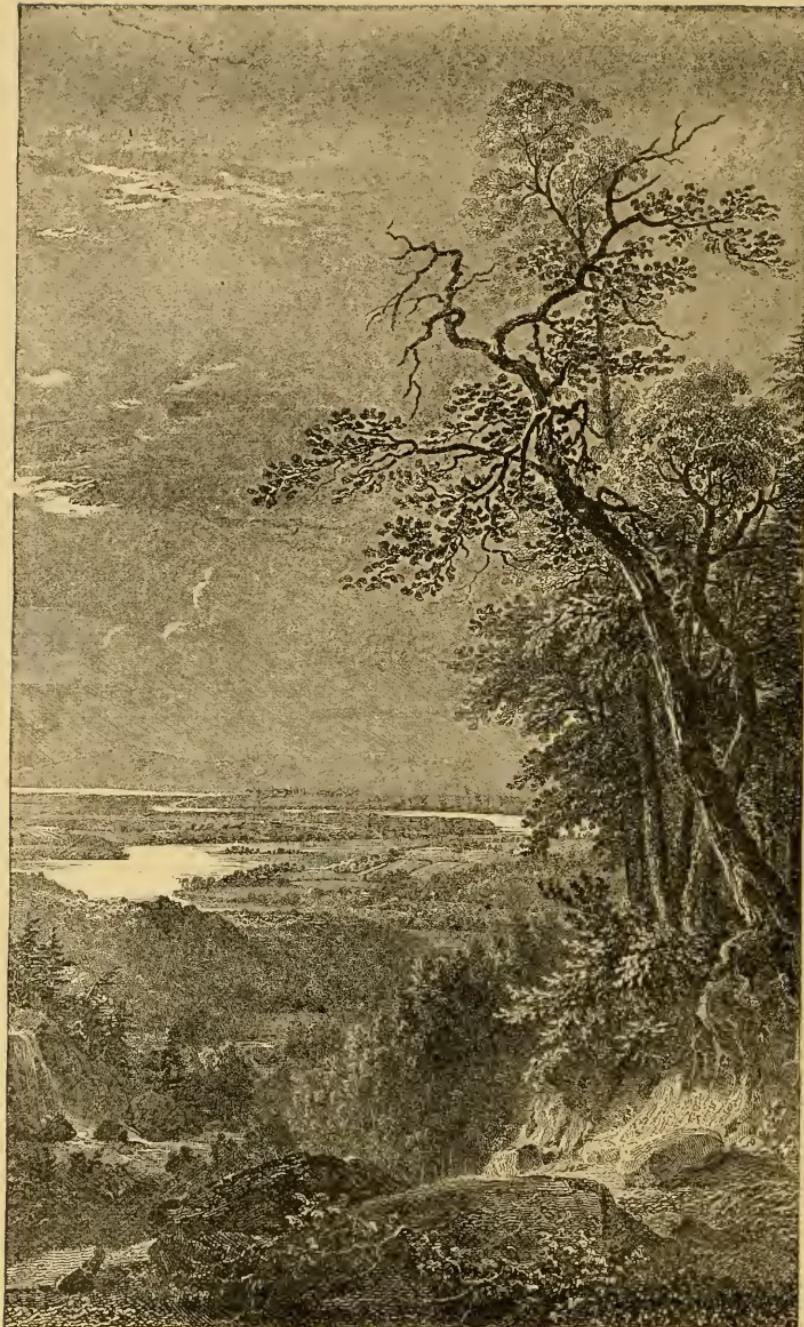
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of the Class that graduated in
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First View of Nature.

BIONOPSIS

A TRUE VISION OF LIFE.

BY
REV. SIDNEY G. LAW.

Of the Seminary Class that graduated
in 1855. Now, in 1892, Chaplain at
The Tombs, New York City. This poem
was composed at  his residence
on Staten Island,

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DEDICATION.
TO THE
WISE COUNSELLOR,
BELOVED COMPANION,
AND
GOD GIVEN HELPMEET
OF MY LIFE.

February, 1888.

PREFACE.

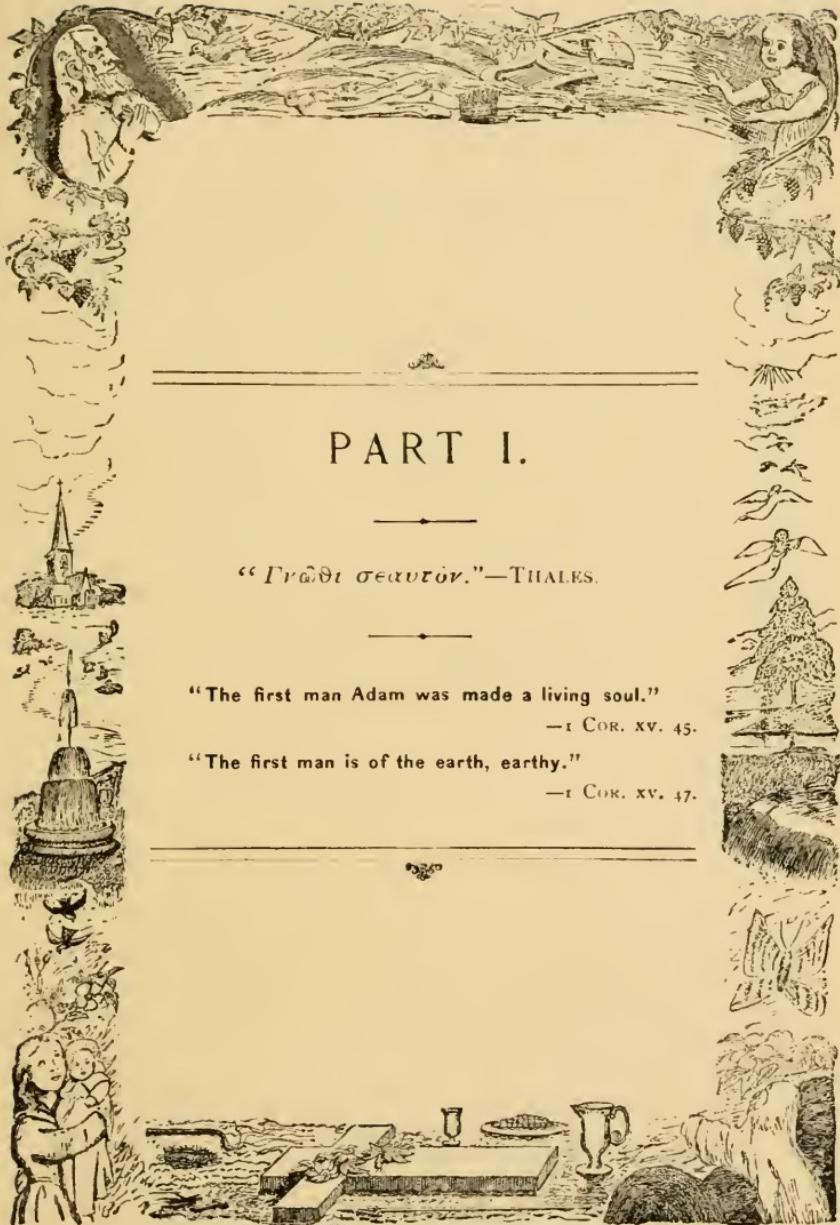
THIS book is commended especially to thoughtful youth. Its aim has been not to amuse an idle fancy with delicate and ingenious conceits, but rather to engage the heart with the love of truth; for truth, even when least adorned, is more truly wonderful and beautiful than fiction. Its purpose as its title implies, is to give a true view of life.

It does not treat life, as, on the one hand, a jest, or a song, or an hour of foolish sport, nor, on the other hand, as a penal term of "hard and stern realities," nor even as an opportunity for selfish emolument or aggrandizement, or a season of belittling cares, and vanishing hopes. It seeks to make manifest its true character, its sublime relations; its wonderful opportunities, its unspeakably glorious destiny. There can be no question in the mind of one who lives a *true life*, "Is life worth living?"

The book is also humbly commended to those who have no need of the author's instructions, but are, nevertheless, ready to rejoice, with him, in the review of the blessed things here gathered from the Fountain of Truth, and who,—though their heads may be now putting on the silver (ere they put on the gold of the New Jerusalem),—find their hearts still young with love, and glowing with immortal hope. May all who read it share in the life described is the prayer of the

AUTHOR.

(vii.)



PART I.

Τρωθι σεαυτόν.—THALES.

"The first man Adam was made a living soul."
—1 COR. XV. 45.

"The first man is of the earth, earthly."
—1 COR. XV. 47.

INVOCATION.

Aid us, O Father, rightly to declare
Thy thought sublime, in this strange life of ours,
So bright with promise, in its opening fair,
So soon beset with dark and adverse powers.
Creation holds the thought too well concealed,
Declaring not thy purpose, good or ill ;
But in thy Word we see thy mind revealed,
Our hearts with love and loftiest hopes to fill.
Oh grant me, Lord, the wisdom to discern
The wisdom of thy thoughts, in work and word,
And may my tongue with holy rapture burn
To speak the glory of my gracious Lord.

(xi.)

LECTORI.

Imagination's free aspiring wing
Bears us aloft, and, as we fly, we sing.
Wide through the realms of space and time we trace
The source and end of our illustrious race.
Attend, fair students of the good and true,
And mount with us. Together we shall view
Events so strange, and scenery so sublime,
The crowding wonders of momentous time,
That unassisted human thought must fail
Their heaven-hid heights of mystery to scale,
Or, with a measurement of sense, to sound
Their dark, inscrutable abyss, profound.
Pass we the eras of chaotic void,
Eras immense, with speculations rife,
Our humbler thoughts more usefully employed
With the grand problems of our human life.

(xiii.)

PROEM.

'Tis said that, in the ages of the dateless past,
This world, a vapor from some glowing centre cast,
 Moved through the realms of space,
A mere chaotic void, a vast profound abyss
Of jarring elements, or formless emptiness ;
 And darkness veiled its face.

But o'er that deep profound, and through that ray-
 less night,
Echoed the brooding Spirit's voice.—“*Let there be
light !*”
 At once light chased the gloom !
Whence came it, none could tell, or, how a word
 alone
Evoked it, none could guess, unless from Him it
 shone
 Who doth all worlds illume.

But from the wonder-working of that mighty word,
And from the blessed light and presence of the Lord,
 Beauty from chaos grew ;
And forces most diverse were brought to unity ;
God's glory shone through all the vast diversity,
 As light shines through the dew.



BIONOPSIS.

BOOK FIRST.

Behold the glories of that radiant morn,
When man, proud master of the world, was born.
O day of wonders ! Long expected day !
When all the mists of chaos rolled away,
And from her womb, at last, old Mother Earth,
Touched by God's hand gave forth this wondrous
Ye Sister Planets ! In your courses stay, [birth.
To hail the advent of this glorious day !
Hark ! While the morning stars together sing !
And all God's Sons, with joy, make heaven ring !
Rejoice, O Earth ! Ye mountains ! and ye hills !
Thou loud-mouthed ocean ! and ye laughing rills !
Ye sighing forests, change your sighs to song.
Ye distant echoes, soft, your strains prolong.
Heard Heaven the tidings ? Heard she, from afar,
The rushing wheels of God's triumphal car ?
In expectation hushed, with ear attent,
Heard she the distant strains of music blent ?
They hail the advent of a new born race,
The heirs, on earth, of God's amazing grace !
New heirs of Heaven itself, and love divine !
Destined at last, at God's right hand to shine !
Lowly, and yet sublime was Adam's birth,
An uncrowned king, first monarch of the earth.

No palace, realm, nor retinue,
No sceptre, throne, nor royal pomp he knew.
No mother's tender ministry was his,
No home affections filled his youth with bliss.
Cast early on the world's cold charities,
A stranger, in a strange world, lone, and wild,
Friendless, and fatherless was God's own child.
In some dim cave, perchance, he opened first
His wondering eyes, when on his senses burst
The consciousness of being, and strange thought
At once began, with weighty questions fraught,—
“Who am I? whence? and where? and how? and
why?

And what is this strange place, wherein I lie?”
At once he rose, with manhood's thoughtful mind
At every step new mysteries to find.

And (first and fairest of God's works) sweet light
Greeted his soul, and lured his charmed sight.
That light the gloom of chaos first dispelled,
And now appears, by man with joy beheld,
Glancing through jewelled drops along the way,
To lead his willing steps, with gentle ray,
To Heaven's bright splendors, in the open day.
And so may God's true light befriend each soul
Who takes her guidance and who seeks her goal.
All hail bright essence! What, or who, art thou?
Thyself unseen, thy gleams all things endow
With form and beauty to the wondering sense,
Like Him!—And surely yet not He?—but whence?
Oh tell from what bright realm thou com'st to bless
My lonely soul, in this dark wilderness?

Thou art a glimmer of the same great thought,
That into life my thinking soul hath brought.
This dim and lonely grot thy smile doth cheer,
While shades of night dissolve and disappear.
Lead on ! I follow ! Guide my steps aright.
My soul is glad ! I am a child of light ! ”

Reaching, at length, the grotto’s open door,
Amazed he stands to gaze and to adore.
For, wide outspread to his astonished eyes,
Lay the fair fields of Earth’s first Paradise !
Behold the man ! Formed by the hand divine,
To image forth his God, how doth he shine,
As fair and ruddy as the morning light,
Chasing the shades and mists of chilly night.
Athwart the dark mysterious cave he stands,
In naked grandeur, sovereign of all lands.
Begirt with rocks, with trailing vines o’erhung,
By nature’s fairy fingers lightly flung,
In graceful fringes from the cliffs o’erhead,
And with a flower-decked, grassy carpet spread
In front, the cave looks forth upon a view
As wide and fair as ever mortal knew ;
But fairer, grander, more sublime is he
Who looked o’er all this vast expanse, to see
If, anywhere, his wondering eyes may find
The Author of it all, that causal Mind,
That first conceived and formed the wondrous plan,
And then, to view it, called forth thinking man.
A stately man is he, kingly and grand,—
The perfect workmanship of God’s own hand.

His form unmatched, for beauty, strength and grace,
Sweetness, and dignity dwell in his face
(For cold distrust, dark envy, pride, and scorn,
Sad fruit of sin, in man are not yet born).

Health tints his cheeks and forehead broad and high,
Pure innocence, and bliss illume his eye.

Locks dark, and clust'ring, crown his noble head,
And manhood's honors o'er his face are shed.

But far above them all, to crown the whole,
Beams radiant forth, a pure and noble soul.

This gives to man his high pre-eminence
O'er all the works of God, sublime, immense—
Sublimer still the spirit breathed in man,
From God, like God, end of God's wondrous plan.
And now, to view his work, God leads his child,
Untaught of ill, by sin yet undefiled,
Out from the darkness by a thread of light,
His soul astonished at the marvellous sight.

Wonder, and awe, and rapturous surprise
Beam from his face, and sparkle in his eyes.
“O realm of light ! How beautiful !” he cries.
“Emerging from this cave, a low walled room,
Dismal, and close, and shrouded deep in gloom,
Where first I drew my breath,—my earliest home,—
I enter this vast vaulted hall, whose height,
Beyond my touch, exceeds my wondering sight.
O arch sublime ! ethereal, built of light !
And far away, on either hand, I view
Above, a depth of clear translucent blue,
Below, a vast expanse of varied hue ;—

Behind me rocks, on towering rocks, arise,
A central column to support the skies ;
Beneath me woods, and precipices steep,
And roaring brooks, and chasms dark and deep.

“This scene of solemn grandeur holds my soul
In awe profound. I trace, throughout the whole,
A hand invisible, of infinite might,
A mind Supreme o'er Earth, and Heaven's great
height.

With mystery hemmed in on every side,
I tremble in my heart, and yet rejoice.
I cry aloud ; but hear no answering voice.
Amidst this marvellous scene alone I stand,
Myself the work of that same unseen hand
That formed all else, and yet himself conceals,
While wisdom, goodness, might, his work reveals.
Thou world, with wonders filled ! An endless store !
My curious mind thy treasures longs t'explore.
'Tis mystery all ! By what enchantment wrought,
Or when, or why, exceeds my highest thought ;
But this thought claims and fills my inmost mind,
Whatever end, or purpose, was designed,
'Twas wise, and good, and worthy of that source
Whence all things sprung. 'Twas no blind aimless
force.

Yet not the only unseen power I find
Th' invisible supreme, creative Mind ;
For manifest are subtle forces too,
Where'er I turn, whatever I may do.

I pause and list. What is it now I hear?
What force is borne to my attentive ear?
I cannot touch it.—If I smite this rock,
My hand and body feel the answering shock:
But when I speak, or list to other sound,
I see no substance, feel no strong rebound,
Yet to my mind a power is manifest,
Which pleasures sweet, and teeming thoughts attest.

“I pluck this flower, so beautiful and bright
It seems some fair ethereal child of light.
I’ll ask it ‘Claikest thou thy humble birth,
Akin to me, from this same mother, earth?’
It answers not, yet to my soul there steals
Sensation strange, which hidden force reveals.
With wondrous power it penetrates and thrills
My very soul, and with keen pleasure fills.
Wee flower I love thee! For in thee I find
First trace of life, to greet my longing mind.
Does then some spiritual essence rare
Reside within thy fragile form so fair?
I list in vain. The blossom still replies,
‘I only breathe of Him, who rules the skies.’
Be my breath also spent to speak His praise!
To know and serve Him may I spend my days.

“Again, what force, mysterious, dwells in light
That by it far-off objects reach my sight,
Borne swiftly on its noiseless, viewless wings,
While each new messenger new pleasure brings!
These images but messengers I deem,

And not the substance of the forms they seem ;
But what true essence theirs I cannot guess,
Or how aught real can come from nothingness.
Yet this I know, these forms are true as light,—
Their message, too, my mind may read aright.
Tell me ye messengers that light has caught,
And to my curious mind has strangely brought,
Speak ye alone of forms far off and dim,
Reflecting light, or speak ye more of Him,
Whence ye proceed ?

I know I read, ye right—

‘ We bear God’s truth. We shine in His own light !
Be I, too, bearer of the light divine,
In God’s own splendor, evermore to shine.

“ But Oh to find out more and more of God !
For this my thoughts spring up, and fly abroad.
On every side his wondrous hand I trace,
I long to hear him and behold his face.
And can he see me ? Can he hear my speech ?
Then low I’ll bend. His favor I’ll beseech.

“ O Thou, Supreme, who thought and being gave.
Thee I adore, and this great boon I crave.
Show me thyself ! Oh let me hear thy voice.
Be near, and let my soul in Thee rejoice.
Or if to learn by dim reflected light
Must be my lot, ’twill still be my delight.
'Tis bliss to learn of Thee. Thy works all praise
To learn and praise Thee, let me spend my days.”

No voice replied to Adam’s earliest plea,

No stranger sight than aught yet seen appeared.
And yet, through all his soul, there came a sense
Of presence most divine, delight most sweet.
His heart rejoiced in God, as near and dear,
And long he knelt and lingered at the spot,
Where this sweet consciousness was first enjoyed.

Then, rising, he looked forth again to see
If yet, the world, so soon forgot, remained.
Sweeter than first fair sight of Paradise,
Sweeter than melody of human voice,
Or all the imagery of human thought
Was that pure, deep, unspeakable delight,
From God's approving presence in his soul.

And yet he still rejoiced that Earth remained ;
For man has twofold elements of bliss :
His spiritual joys transcend the power
Of sense to reach, or earthly things to give,
Even as a lark soars singing up at morn,
And flowers and fruits below are all forgot
But as the lark once more descends with joy
To feast on things below, midst fruits and flowers,
So man has pleasures in the things of earth
So pure that angels might be glad to share.
Material things afford sincere delight,
When rightly used (their Author unforget),
For, when man's spirit takes true cognizance
Of inward meaning in these outward forms,
It joys in Him from whom all joy proceeds.

Alas for those who find no joys above
The things of sense; for, groping all their days,
They walk in darkness, and know not the light.
Material things reflect the light of God.
They make light visible to mortal eyes,
By it themselves in beauty bright arrayed.
He who despises them reproves his God,
Who made them all, pronouncing all things good.
But he, who, groping by the sense of touch,
Heeds not the light in which they shine from God,
Loses their meaning, and their chief delight.

And now began the quest of Adam's life.
Leaving the heights, and contemplative thought,
He started forth to seek the God of all,
At every step met by some new surprise.

Descending from his lonely cavern home,
With careful steps along the mountain side,
Rock-built, and beautiful with vines and ferns,
He reached a mossy bank o'erhung with trees,
And saw, below, a strange mysterious sight.

At first appeared a smooth and empty space,
Yet many hued, and bright with silvery light;—
Its surface gently moved, and yet remained,
And as he gazed, with wonder in his eyes,
He seemed to catch, as through a cleft in earth,
A glimpse of other skies and other clouds,
Floating in strange and silent majesty.
And, 'neath the other bank, inverted there,
Were rocks and trees, twin mates of those above.

And suddenly!—(He started at the sight!)—
Below his feet he saw a human form!

(Ah how his heart did flutter with surprise.)

Just like his own, the body and the limbs,
And gazing straight in his inquiring eyes,
He saw a face of wondrous beauty there.

A-down the mossy bank at once he slid,
The mystery to solve, and welcome, meet,
To give to him who waited there below.—

The splashing waters laughed at his mistake!

He, too had langhed;—but disappointment felt
To find that form, mere image of his own!

And yet with wonder, now, he gazed, to see
More of himself than he had known before.

How beautiful, the eyes that God had given
To see the wonders of his wondrous world!

What majesty, and beauty in his face!

Yet scarcely paused he now, to think of self.
With curious interest filled to trace the cause
Of this deceit in this new element.

Standing in water midway to his knees,
Through the pellueid stream he saw his feet
Firm on the sands below, and farther on,
Were rocks, and shells, and pebbles in the depths,
Yet on the surface, still, he saw the forms
Of floating clouds, and waving boughs o'er head.

Stooping, he smote it with his open hand,
Then watched the sparkling rings that sped away

On every hand, e'en to the further shore.
The grateful coolness of the limpid waves
Was pleasant to his limbs. He dipped again,
Then from the hollow of his hand, he drank,
And was refreshed. Then stooping down he
scooped

The glittering sands, all bright with grains of gold.

He gazed with wonder on the shining scales.
But Oh how little thought he of the worth
One day to be attached to such dead dust.
Behold him as with scrutinizing eyes
He scans the meaning of these golden types.
O Adam, if, with keen prophetic sight,
Thou now couldst read the long sad tale of sin,
And woe, and crime, these symbols might foretell,—
The dreadful fruit of undue love of gold,—
Methinks, with sudden, shuddering horror filled
And sore dismay, and agony of grief,
And wrath, thou quick would'st hurl those glitter-
ing scales,
As some foul reptile, from thy trembling hand !

“Root of all evil” is the love of gold.
Thus speaks God’s Word ; and history records
Evils unnumbered on the human race,
Which love of gold rather than love of God,
And trusting more in gold than God, have wrought.

O metal, “precious” thou art called by men,
And deemed the key of mortal happiness !
And rightly used, thou art a useful link

To bind in fair exchange and mutual weal
The universal brotherhood of man.
Nor canst thou e'er be charged with human crime.
But how perverted is the soul of man,
That thinks in thee, his happiness resides,
And makes of thee his God. From such mistakes
There flows a flood of human misery.
We gaze with trembling on the awful scenes
That rise like dreadful dreams in long review,
Before our aching eyes, and anguished hearts.
We look on landscapes, beautiful and sweet,
With peace and plenty from a bounteous heaven.
But suddenly, behold ! the clouds of hell
Have wrapped us in ! And hell itself appears !
O horrid fields of blood, and hellish wrath !
Can these be men ? They rage like fiends let loose !
Sporting with death itself ! As if in league
With him who holds the power of death and hell !
Whenee art thou, dreadful wrath ? From love of
gold !
And whenee thou horde of dark, malignant crimes ?
Ye midnight plottings, and ye deeds of shame ;
Ye cabals of the so called great and wise ;
Ye petty cheatings of the low and mean ;
Ye frauds and thefts of high and low degree ;
Ye base oppressions of the poor and weak ;
Thou "sum of villanies," imbruting men ;
And, oh ! chief instrument of hell's deceit,—
Thou cup of ruin, fell despair, and death,
Destroying human souls ; and last, not least,

Thou foul betrayal of the Lord himself!
Whence came ye all? From sinful love of gold!

But oh how little, in his innocence,
As Adam gazed upon these glittering sands
Dreamed he of all this catalogue of woes.
So, casting from his hand the unprized wealth,
He waded to the lakelet's further side,
And sought new wonders in its rocky banks.

And still new treasures met his curious quest,
Most precious gems, of hue and lustre rare,
Amidst the sands or in the clefts of rock,
Diamonds and sapphires, rubies, amethysts,
The topaz, and the emerald, and the quartz,
In clustering crystals, beautiful and clear.
As beautiful to him, these common gems
As th' uncut diamond's richer, rarer light.

But leaving all behind, he climbed again
The sloping bank, his studies to pursue,—
A world of unknown wonders to explore.
Glancing along a sunny field, he saw
A pleasing sight, of rich and clustering fruit,
Springing direct from lap of Mother Earth,
And peering from a mass of emerald green
With ruddy brightness in the morning light
Stooping, with curious wonder filled,
He plucked and tasted with a keen delight.
Then lying at full length along the grass,
He courteously addressed the wellspread feast :

“ Bright little berries! Some remorse I feel
To spoil your beauty, and your life to quench;

But he who made you, sure will not forbid
To satisfy my hunger with your sweets.
And wherefore made? no sentient life is yours,
Your own delightful sweetness to enjoy,—
Your pain had else been minister of pain,—
To minister delight must be your end.
For this ye shine in ruddy splendor bright.
For this your leaves, their emerald hues display.

“ And not delight alone, nor needful food,—
Instruction too, for each attentive mind,
Ye have in store, nor can the store be won
By any passing glance; but deep research
Will find still deeper truths to lure it on
To deeper search, and truths still more profound.
The more I learn, still more I find to learn.
And as I trace the shining stream of truth,
To find its secret fountain, while convinced,
Still more and more, it has a hidden source,
Too high for me to scale, too deep to sound,
I also learn still more, and more of God.
I see his wisdom, goodness, power displayed
On every side, where'er I turn my eyes.
Behold this feast, delighting every sense.
'Tis not alone a bounty most profuse;—
On every leaf I read the lines of thought,
• Of well linked thought, revealing mind to mind
What if I cannot reach the forming mind,
Or see the tracing hand? Must I infer
There is no thought expressed, no mind its source?
Absurdity profound! Folly supreme!

By plainest inference, in me the fault!
And mine the weakness! Still 'tis mine to learn,
(Nor rest content with aught save highest truth),
To learn of God! Deepest of all delights!

“ How curious too the texture of these leaves,
Their shape and frame-work all so aptly planned!
How beautiful in hue and form their fruit!
How rich its juicy sweetness! and how strange
That all this life and varied beauty springs
From this same soil, this cold and lifeless earth.”

While reasoning thus, he saw, with new surprise,
A host of other guests attend the feast,
In varied forms and costumes rich and gay.
And first the tiniest of these creatures gay,
Came gathering in, a strange and motley crowd,
On foot, in air, and some by flying leaps;
Some dressed in green and gold, and some in black,
And some with wings in rainbow colors dyed.

Adam looked on with wonder and delight,
To hail the advent of a higher life
Than plants and fruit fast anchored in one spot;
And, watching for a while their gay antics
Half in soliloquy, he thus began:

“ Strange world! Are these your proper citizens?
Quaint little people! Come ye all as friends?
And fit companions of my solitude?
Have ye, then, souls, like mine? And have ye
speech

To tell your thoughts ? Or have ye minds to think ?
Some strange intelligence directs your course.
Tell me, I pray you, whence and why ye are ?
Have ye no message to my longing soul ?
Vouchsafe ye no reply ? And come ye then,
To complicate the problem strange of life ?”

Thus, while he spoke, he lifted up his eyes,
And lo ! A creature fair, with outspread wings,
White as the driven snow, came fluttering down,
From some ethereal height, and lighting near,
Looked up in Adam’s face, with curious eyes,
But spoke no word, and uttered forth no sound,
Till, following her, another came, and then—
With gentle cooings, and with kind caress
Of crossing bills, they told their tale of love.
But Adam looked, and marvelling, longed to know
The happy secret ; yet he asked in vain.
They spoke a language all unknown to him.

These were but couriers of the coming host
That gather from the skies, from woods and fields,
Of every shape, and size, and plumage fair,
From the tall crane with stately steps, and slow,
E’en to the humming-bird with wings like light.

With growing wonder, Adam named them all,
O’er all the winged hosts himself the king.
And yet two things he almost envied them,
The one the power to mount on soaring wings,
To heaven’s blue height, and range the wide world
o’er,

The other, mated love ; for quick he saw
He lacked an element of soul's delight,
Which they, without his loftier soul, possessed.

And while he meditated and admired,
(The whole scene full of beauty, and the air
Vocal with music, worthy Paradise),
He saw new forms approaching from the woods ;
The graceful, gentle deer, with timid steps
And eyes so large and full of liquid light,
With wonder watching Adam's wondering eyes,
And close behind, the lion, king of beasts ;
The tall giraffe, and merry little lamb ;
And countless hosts of living creatures came
To own their king : and Adam named them all.

And yet for Adam no helpmeet was found,
And no congenial soul to share his joys.
And when he saw the happy mated love
Of insects, birds, and beasts, and witnessed too
Their sweet, mysterious intercourse of thought
His own great solitude oppressed his soul.
A God-like empire o'er created things
Is not enough to satisfy the heart.
And God himself might weary of a realm,
Where love met no response of happy love.

Thus musing on his isolated lot,
He saw the sun glide slowly down the west.
The birds and beasts retired to darkening woods,
And left his lonely soul to solitude.

The parting splendors of the dying day
Now caught his eye, and filled his raptured thought
The clouds that gathered in the western skies
To bid the sinking king of day farewell,
Arrayed in pomp and splendor waited there,
Silent and grand. High up the arch of heaven,
And far along the broad horizon spread,
Bright fleecy forms in crimson and in gold
They seemed a host attendant on their king.
And from these forms a mystic glory fell
That tinted trees and hills with rosy light,
So beautiful, and yet so quickly gone,
It seemed that earth blushed at the kiss of heaven !
But soon the king of day sank out of sight.
The morning clouds were now in sack-cloth dressed
And night her sable pall drew o'er the skies.

Adam, at first with solemn awe beheld
The fading day, and gathering shades of night,
And deeper loneliness came o'er his soul.

“Is this the end ? Shall light no more return ?
And is my life one strange and fleeting day ?
Surely the Power Divine that placed me here,
Hath some high end in view, and will reveal,
To patient waiting, his all wise design.”
Then bowing low he lifted up his prayer:

“Infinite mind ! Thy wisdom I adore !
I marvel at the wonders of thy hand.
I thank thee for the distant view of thee
I have this day beheld in all thy works.

Yet long to learn far more, and nearer still
Be brought to thee. O grant me this request:
If yet from me thou wilt thyself conceal,
At least reveal thy will, that I may do
All that thou would'st, in glad obedience.
And oh reveal some likeness of thyself
To represent thee, whom my soul may love,
And with whom, sweet communion hold, of thee."

He ceased, and looking, wondered much to see
The deepening darkness of the gathering night;
But, glancing up to heaven, he saw, amazed,
A wondrous sight ! the glittering hosts above,
Filling the dark blue vault with eyes of light;
And high above them all, serene and clear,
The silver moon sailed midst the moving clouds.
With new delight, Adam beheld them all,
And long he gazed, and wondered at the sight;
Then, when the dews of night fell damp and chill,
And drowsiness assumed her gentle sway
(Gentle, but strong as triple bars of steel),
He sought a shelter of embowering trees,
And made a couch of leaves and feathery twigs,
Then laid him down ; but now sad, lonely thoughts
Came trooping thick, like shadows, to his mind.
With every sense attuned to keen delight,
And not one jar or sharp, discordant note,
His harmony of life was incomplete;
There lacked one strain of purest melody
To fill his inmost soul with music sweet,
To thrill his heart, chord answering to chord.

But as he lay and slept, he dreamed strange dreams.
He seemed to feel a hand of mighty power,
Laid from the skies upon his sleeping frame,
That held him firm, e'en as his hand might hold
A little egg to free the imprisoned bird.
And yet he feared no ill; although he lay
All helpless as a worm within that grasp.
He knew, and felt it was the selfsame hand
That fashioned first his form, and gave it life.
And now a face of infinite majesty,
Which seemed to take the place of earth and sky
(That slunk away abashed, and disappeared),
Gazed through his frame upon his awe struck soul;
For in that gaze were gentleness and love,

And, in that countenance divine, he saw
A likeness of himself. He thanked his God,
Who heard his humble prayer, and now revealed,
To his exalted soul (set free from sense—
The world itself forgot) his glorious face.
And now, 'twas manifest, some special work
Of the divine compassion was designed;
And, in a voice of sweetest tenderness,
Thus spoke the Almighty One.

“ Be not afraid.

I come to bless thee, though I cause thee pain,
To grant thy prayer, and do thee greater good—
From thine own bleeding side I bring thee forth
One who shall be to thee a second self,
And dearer than thyself; for whom thyself

Most willingly wouldst bleed, e'en as My Son,
In ages yet to come, will yield his side,
For his own cherished bride to pour his blood.”

And then he felt a sense, unknown before.
Of dreadful pain!—of mortal agony!—
As if his soul were from its body torn!
Forth from his riven side, his life-blood flowed
One breath of prayer!—and then!—he knew no
more!

* * * * *

When ruddy morning sent her heralds forth
To tell the coming of the king of day,
And many a tree-top choir their sweetest notes
Attuned to melodies of pure delight,
To hail his coming, and to praise their Lord,
Adam awoke from slumbers most profound.
At first he lay and listened, loth to lose
One liquid note of that entrancing Psalm,
And felt his inmost soul attuned to praise.
But then the thought of his own solitude
Came back—the single shadow o'er his soul:
“Why should the birds in happy chorus join,
While I must lift a solitary voice?”

Then he remembered his mysterious dream,
And hope and prayer together filled his soul,—
Prayer answered ere 'twas framed anew in word.

He rose. And there! to his astonished eyes,
Appeared his answered prayer!—for beauteous Eve

Lay sweetly sleeping on his humble couch !
O sight of rapture ! Sight to move his soul
To sweetest hope, and deepest tenderness !

Afraid to break the stillness, or to rouse,
By gentlest touch, the angel from her dreams,—
Afraid !—lest,—some fair visitant from heaven,—
Awakened, she might spread some hidden wings,
And vanish, like a bird,—afraid to breathe
Lest, as a vision bright it soon might fade,
He lifted up his heart in praise to God !
Then sitting gently by the fair one's side,
He gazed with patience, yet with eager hope,
Until the opening of those fringed lids
Should be the opening of new worlds to him.

O Adam ! Was not Paradise enough,
That thou shouldst turn from all, so soon forgot,
To yearn for her, whom graceless wits deride,
To seek thy Paradise in her fond heart ?

Yes for a time, oblivious of all else.—
The birds their sweetest notes employed in vain,
The morning spread her splendors in the east,
Sweet roses cast their fragrance on the air,
And tempting fruits spread forth a rich repast—
The lord of all, enwrapt in every sense,
Was conscious only of her sleeping form,
Who, all unconscious, held his captive soul !

Each graceful ringlet of her sunny hair,
Each dimple on her fair and rosy cheeks,

Each smile upon her ruby lips,
Each gentle heaving of her snowy breast,
And every trace of thought upon her brow
Were closely watched, and treasured in his heart.

And when she raised her eyes of heavenly blue,
All full of deepest wonder, and surprise,
And gazed in his, so piercing, dark, and deep
(Her first strange glimpse of life), it thrilled
through—

Yet still his lips were mute. He waited hers.

“Art thou my Maker?”

Adam gently laughed ;—
And yet rejoiced ; for, though so far astray,
The question showed an intellectual life.
“Oh no ! Sweet being. We are twain, yet one.
The God that made thee, also fashioned me.
He made the world, and all that is therein.”

“But how ? and when ? and why ?
For thou art wise.”

“Ah, fair one, easier far to ask, than tell.
And yet profoundly I have pondered too
These questions great, thou now dost ask of me,
And gladly hear thee ask the same ; for now
I hail thee helpmeet in the problem grand,
Which ours it is to solve, by life-long quest.
But one sweet truth I tell thee now with joy,
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh art thou :

Sprung from my sundered side, I claim thee mine,
And I am thine. For thee my blood was shed,
And should be shed again if there be need.
As I am Man, Woman thy name shall be."

"I scarcee, O man, can understand thy words,
Nor yet myself, nor aught of all I see.
'Tis mystery all!—yet beautiful, and good!
I look with wonder on that blue above,
So vast, so high, so decked with moving forms,
So lit with dazzling colors in the east,
And with a light too bright for eyes to bear!
With wonder too I view these nearer forms,
Those stately pillars rising from the ground,
Sustaining verdant arches overhead,
Which seem the very home of life and song.
What sweet, what rapturous sounds ring through
them all,
And oh how beautiful these little gems,
Of tenderest hue, upspringing from the earth,
That breathe out fragrancee from their dewy lips!
All, all is beautiful!

Yet I confess—
That thou, O Man, art noblest of them all,
And without thee—"

She faltered, and a light
Illumed her eye, more tender than before!
The deepening color dyed her glowing cheek,
Telling her thought,—she scarcely dared to speak.

Then Adam took her lovely offered hand,

And, with his bearded lips, impressed a kiss,
That spoke and sealed the inward vow of each.

“ I freely give ! ”

‘ I fondly claim thee, mine ! ”

“ With thee, O Man, my counsellor and friend,
I tremble not, though all things seem so strange,
With thee I’ll venture forth to meet the world.
From thee I’ll gladly learn the lore of life ;
For with thy presence all seems full of joy.
Sweet is the smile of morning, and the breath
Of dewy flowers ; but sweeter far thy smile,
At which my heart leaps up, and sings for joy.”

“ O lovely Woman. If alone, before
’Twere joy to live and learn, ’tis added bliss,—
Which words were weak to tell,—that thou art here
Thou art another world ! another self!
In thee, self, world, and loneliness forgot !
Flower of my being ! Fruitage of my soul !
If thou, with me, art brave to meet the world !
With thee I’d even dare to leave the world !
Oh happy lot, to share the world with thee ! ”

Thus Adam, with an overflowing joy
Held conference sweet with this dear gift of heaven,
And, kneeling, rendered thanks to God Supreme,
While Eve devoutly joined with heart and tongue.
Then, listening to the tuneful feathered choirs,
She tuned her bird-like voice in happy song,

While Adam's basso filled the harmony,
And led the thought to heights yet more divine:

“O Lord of all, now deign to hear
The grateful song we raise,
And may thy grace our spirits cheer,
And tune our hearts to praise.

“We thank thee, Lord, for life and light,—
For all thy gifts so free,—
Our souls are filled with pure delight
That all still speak of thee.

“Thyself unseen, thy hand we trace
Where'er our footsteps turn;
But oh, to view thy glorious face
Our hearts within us burn.

“Oh guide our feet in wisdom's way,
And fill our souls with light.
Be thou the rapture of our day,
And comfort of our night.”

Then, hand in hand, the happy pair went forth,
In careless innocence, and happy hope,
To learn sweet truths by their great Teacher taught
Of wisdom, goodness, love, and power divine.
No trksome task was theirs. No close-walled room
Shut out sweet sunlight, or pure breath of heaven,—
The world their school-room, and the vaulted dome
Of heaven its roof, and nature their great book.
Free as the wind, to roam where'er they would,

With steps as fleet and nimble as the deer,
With ears alert to hear, and eyes to see,
And minds to ponder well each hidden truth,
They drank in knowledge with a deep delight.
When day was done, sweet sleep, with magic power
Stole all fatigue away, renewed their strength,
Refreshed their souls, and plumed for fresh delight
Then, in the silent visions of the night,
They heard a voice:—

“ I come to grant your prayer
(To hear and answer prayer is my delight):
There is for you a Paradise prepared,
The home desired, where I will oft reveal
My presence, yet more clearly, to your sight.
When first the morning greets the blushing East,
And gilds with splendor all the Orient skies,
Thither direct your steps, and ye shall find
That home most beautiful, secure and blest.”

They woke and told their dreams with joyful hearts,
Then after happy converse, prayer and praise
Lay down again, and slept, while angels watched
And kept their happy bower secure from harm.

In his favor is life.—Ps. xxx. 5.

Keep
thy EBBAR^E
With All Diligence

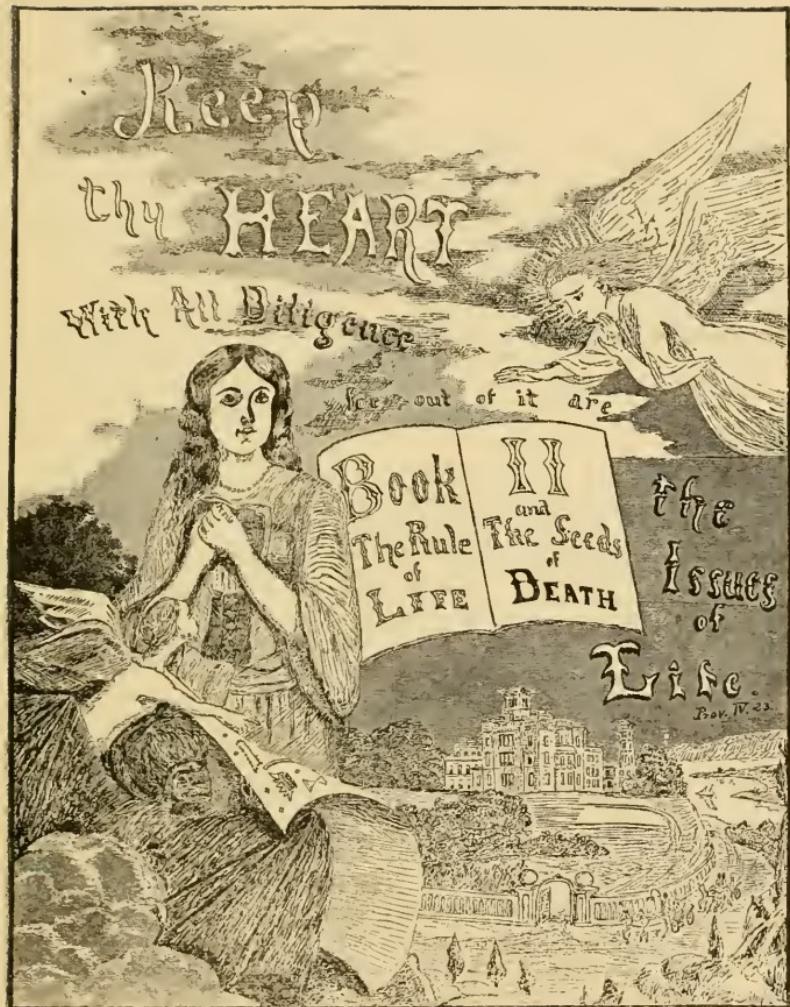
Book
The Rule
of LIFE

II
and The Seeds
of DEATH

The
Issues
of

LIFE.

Bow IV. 23.



PROEM.

O THOU Supreme, from whom all power proceeds,
Known through the earth, by signs and mighty
deeds,

Yet hid in mystery from mortal eyes,
In light, in darkness, or in azure skies,
Grant me, thy servant, one clear glimpse of thee,
Where thou dost dwell in glorious majesty.

Thy sceptre, Lord, with all resistless might,
Extends beyond the utmost reach of light.
The dark and bottomless abyss of woe
Can yield no refuge to an impious foe.
And e'en creation's utmost realms are blest,
Where'er thy rightful empire is confessed.
Nor power alone,—wisdom, and love divine
(For loving souls) through all thy dealings shine

Should mortals then, against their God engage,
And for thy foes a hopeless warfare wage,
Scorning the goodness of their heavenly Friend,
Against his will, and their own weal contend ?
Such guilt and folly is the dreadful fruit
Of primal sin, all evil's bitter root.

BOOK SECOND.

When earliest dawn inspired the tuneful birds
To give glad greeting to approaching day,
The happy pair awoke, from slumbers sweet,
With new delight to join the psalm of life;
With every fibre of their being tuned,
Accordant with the universal joy;
With health, and innocence, and cheerful hope;
Surrounded, too, by all things bright and good,
Each trill of melody within their ears
Awaked fond echoes in their inmost souls;
And mingled perfume sweet, from wild-wood flowers
Conveyed inspiring unperceived delights,
While every branch that overhung their couch,
Low bending, as a verdant canopy,
More beautiful than lace or arras rich,
Presented fruits, that in their mouths might drop
Of most delicious sweetness to the taste !
All, all was beautiful and good. And yet
Their highest bliss was in each other found,
Their first delight to find each other near,
And each to read the tale of fondest love,
That shone so brightly in each other's eyes.

It is not given to mortal tongue to tell,
Nor thought profane the temple to invade,
Nor groveling passion to attain the height
Of joys accorded pure and holy souls

Linked happily in sacred wedded love.
Their blissful thoughts of gratitude they breathe
In love to Him from whom all love proceeds,
And each, in other, finds his love expressed.
No troublous eares disturbed their happy souls.
For Eve, no load of heavy household tasks,
No anxious questionings, "What shall we eat,
What shall we drink, or what put on," this day,—
No kithen dark, nor hot nor smoldering fire,
Nor implements of culinary art,
Nor strange mishaps, her gentle soul to vex,
Nor torment of perverse domestic help,—
Helpers to ease, but hindrances to grace.
Nature herself, with bounteous hand, well filled,
Offered the daintiest fruits, in form and hue,
And richest flavor to her out-stretched hand.
Needing no help, herself was true help-meet
To him she loved, to lift his soul towards heaven.
And, gazing in her eyes, Adam beheld
A dream of beauty, realized in her,
Perfect and pure, beyond his highest dreams.

For Adam's soul no rude alarms of war,
Or strife of business scarcely less intense,
Affrighted all the rapture of his soul,
E'en as the cooing bird by cruel gun,—
No horrid scream, careering 'mong the hills,
Nor rush and rumbling roar of iron wheels
Warned him to hasten to the crowded mart.
No loud and dismal gong dispelled his dreams,
And bade him to a factory's prison walls,

Midst buzz of whirring wheels, and oil, and dirt,
Where weary hours of dull routine are passed,
And tasks so oft repeated that the soul
Seems dwarfed to likeness of the dead machine
All, all, was peace, and bliss, and soft repose.
Yet talked they much of prospects, and of plans,
Of happy search to find out more of Him,
Their one great Friend, eluding still their sight,
Yet granting every other fondest wish,
And crowning all their lives with love and light.
And when the light grew brighter in the east,
They issued forth to find their promised home.
A path of splendor met their tranced gaze,
All lit with pearls and gems of every hue,
And leading to the very gates of day ;
For every leaf, and tender, grassy spire,
In all the broad expanse, was pearléd with dew.
With joyous hearts they traced the shining road
Until, at length, they reached fair Eden's wall,—
A tall and dense impenetrable hedge,
Through which no foul, nor ravenous beast might
 pass.

Yet gladly oped the gates at their approach,
And glad they entered in, while sweet-voiced birds
Sang loud their welcome into Paradise !
Entrancing beauty filled them with delight.
The wild luxuriance of nature here
Was chastened by the hand of highest art.
Bright velvet lawns appeared, and shady walks,
And gay parterres of sweet and brilliant flowers,

And purling brooks, winding through fields and
glens

With many a cool cascade, to seek, at length,
Nirvana in the bosom of the deep ;
And gem-like lakes, that opened out to streams,
Whose four great heads at length were blent in one,
A noble river, clear and broad, and deep;
And orchards rich with blossoms and ripe fruit,
The pulpy fig, whose fruit precedes its leaf,
Sweeter than manna to the grateful sense,
The juicy orange, with its golden rind,
The pear, the apple, and the luscious peach,
Pomegranate, olive, mango, and the grape,
Whose purple clusters bid the soul rejoice ;
And endless store besides, whose very names
Might fill the page, their virtues all untold.
And here and there they found some cool retreat,
Far from the fervor of the summer sun,
There,—shady nook, with huge recumbent tree,
Winding and twisting with its gnarled limbs,
A natural summer house of curious shape,
And draped, and bedded with the long gray moss
So soft and grateful to the wearied limbs .
And here—a grotto in a towering cliff,
A fairy palace in its beauty rare,
With curious stalactites, and stalagmites,
In fluted columns, pendants, arches, crypts,
Of alabaster whiteness, or with shades,
And delicate tints of many a pleasing hue,
While here and there full many a precious gem
Or crystal rare, sparkled and burned with light.

The long day passed away, in peace and joy,
In curious study of things new and strange,
Or happy contemplation of the old :
For lovely nature opened wide her book,
So full of treasured wisdom and of love,
And happy students found ; for every page
Displayed the impress of their Father's hand.

The signs and symbols of his heavenly care,
Writ on each leaf, shining in every gem,
Whispered in notes of lute like melody,
Distilled in nectar from ambrosial fruits,
In-wrought in flowers of every shade and hue,
And breathed in fragrance on the ambient air
(That like His Spirit filled their souls with life) ;
All, all met glad responses in their hearts.

And oft the raptures of their souls o'erflowed,
In notes of irrepressible delight,
E'en as the gladness of some little bird
Bursts from its swelling throat, without restraint.
Careless of listeners, 'tis impelled to pour
Its pent up rapture to the ear of heaven,
Yet finds glad audience in the ear of earth.
And so the rich, sweet harmony, that flowed
From happy human hearts, and human tongues
Charmed every hearer. Loud and sweet it rang
Through all the happy groves of Paradise,
Winding and echoing through the silent glens,
Till far off mountains caught the faint refrain !
It rose and fell in happy cadences,

Now gushing, like a fountain from the depths,
Now rippling with a trilling melody,
Now in full chorus, like a grand cascade.
The little songsters, on their leafy twigs,
Were hushed to listen with a new delight
(For if 'tis pleasant to pour forth the heart
In happy song, 'tis pleasant too to hear
The music of glad hearts and tuneful tongues,—
Sweetest of all, to those who know the song,
And find its praises echoing in their hearts).
The listening deer stood with their ears erect
To catch the strain, and every gentle thing
The music heard, with wonder and delight;
But best of all their voices reached to heaven,
And God, the Father, who himself had tuned
Their hearts to sing, was pleased to hear the song.
Then arm in arm, through their dear Paradise,
They walked the shaded paths, o'erarched by elms,
Or winding by the brook, or through the dell,
Or up the rocky height, or on the bluff
Where sudden landscapes open to their sight,
Or views of lakes, and streams and islets bright,
Of wondrous beauty to their raptured eyes.
Thus, arm in arm, with many a fond caress,
With happy conversation, song, and prayer,
They roamed their fair domain, and traced that
hand,
Mysterious, that had laid those winding walks,
Those flowers, and fruits had planted, and had led
Their feet in safety to this promised home.

At every turn they almost hoped to see
His smiling face, and hear his gentle voice,
And oft they felt his sacred presence near,
And present joy was thrilled with lively hope
Of higher rapture, when He stood revealed.

Thus passed the happy day, and at its close
They watched the splendors of its ebbing light,
From open summer house, a safe retreat
From falling dews, and on their mossy couch
Reposed their limbs, while broad and bright the
 moon
Uprose to grace anew the charming hour.

Then, in the cool of evening, One appeared
(Enhaloed by a gentle, holy light,
And with a countenance serenely sweet),
Whose form, divine, was like the Son of Man.
Before him every other light grew dim,
And disappeared, and every other form,
Even the best belovéd, was forgot.
Wonder, delight, and holy awe, and love
Possessed their souls. Low at his feet they bowed :
But soon with gentle hand he raised them up,
And long they held communion, high and sweet,
Concerning things they most desired to know,
God's purposes of love, and tender care,
And hints of future wonders, and of bliss
Too high for their young souls to understand.
Nor can our sinful minds well comprehend
The nearness of their intercourse with God,

Nor on their conference venture to intrude,
Nor dare presume to guess the very words,
Of love and goodness uttered by the Lord.
Yet if we venture, in our own weak words,
The thoughts ran thus.

“ My children, lo, I come,
At your request, to show my love, and teach
Your duty, wisdom, and the will of God.
That which already ye begin to know
Shall ever be, without exception true,
Your deepest peace, and highest happiness
Require obedience true, in heart and life,
To every precept of eternal truth.
The least departure from these precepts sure,
In devious and forbidden ways of sin,
Involves sad consequence of guilt and woe,
No mortal mind can trace, nor tongue can tell.
Your God is full of love, and wills your peace,
Your highest weal, and everlasting bliss ;
But God himself can never make you blest
Against the laws of everlasting truth.
Your soul’s best welfare must be ever found
Not in external things which please the sense,
But in its own perfection. That must be
According to the law of God and truth.

“ Nor for yourselves alone ye stand or fall ;
Unnumbered multitudes shall spring from you.
Be fruitful then, and multiply, and thus
Replenish all the earth. Subdue it all,
And have dominion over land and sea,

And over every living thing that moves.
And while ye rule o'er all things else on earth,
Ye must yourselves be subject to the Lord.

“ Yet will I now impose no hard commands
But easy test of your obedience give.
Of all the garden ye may freely eat,
Of every tree and plant of every kind :
But in the midst there stands the tree of life,
Whose fruit your true obedience may reward.
And near it stands the tree whose fatal fruit
Ye must not eat, nor taste, nor even touch.
Its fruit is fair, and has mysterious power.
Knowledge of good and evil it imparts
(Of evil gained, and good unwisely lost).
Such knowledge folly learns, true wisdom shuns.
To eat that fruit is certain death, and woe.”

Then low they bowed, with reverential awe,
And Adam spoke,

“ O Lord we worship Thee.

To see Thee, long has been our dearest wish,
To learn thy holy will. Thy will is ours.
We asked thy teaching, and we thank Thee, taught
We praise Thee too, with overflowing hearts,
For bounties more than we can comprehend,
For largest liberty and highest bliss.
Obedience to thy word shall be our joy,
And, since obedience must have some sure test,
We thank thy goodness 'tis for our own good.
No hard condition has that goodness laid.

'Tis not to toil, nor do the things we hate,
Nor leave undone what we desire to do.
(Else this had proved our souls defiled with sin),
But easy test, to shun the thing we dread,
And do whate'er may cause us most delight.

"Hadst thou commanded what was hard and wrong,
Or sure to cause us pain and misery,
We might have deemed it irksome to obey,
And called it bondage to be bound by law.
But now we find thy law is liberty !
It makes us heirs of God, from folly free."

"Well have ye answered to your King's command.
And now the blessing of the Lord be yours."

Thus spoke the Lord, whose word each blessing
brings.

His benediction closed the conference sweet,
As since, among the assemblies of his saints.

* * * * *

And now to darker themes we turn our thoughts,
Most sad, yet needful rightly to review,
The wiles of Satan, who, with hellish craft,
And foul deceit man's ruin sought through sin
How such a monster in the realms of light,
So full of hate to God and holy truth,
Sprang into being, where all else was good,
Must ever be a problem dark and deep,
Beyond man's power to solve, while veiled in flesh.
Yet still 'tis given to human thought to range

Through other worlds, and bring dark things to light.

To weigh the planets and to trace their course,
To tell of past events and things to come,
Conjunction, occultation, and eclipse.

- And so, by various hints, we gather much
Of spirit life, whose outer form is hid.
We need not deem that souls in other worlds
Have bodies built, like ours, of flesh and blood,
Or any substance more or less opaque,
Or more or less enduring, rare, or dense.
What mortal bodies could endure to live
In Mercury's heat intense ? or in the cold
(More dread than that which girds the lifeless Pole,)
Of great Uranus, in her far-off realm ?
Yet he, who made these worlds, hath power to form
Inhabitants for all conditions meet,
With life as various as the worlds themselves.

And now, kind reader, if, on venturous wings,
Set free from close constraint of fleshly forms,
Your thought, with mine, will leave this atmosphere,
Which, filled with light, vails other worlds from view,

And oft is foul with fogs, and girt with clouds,
We'll seek the secret source of primal sin.—
Alas ! too late ! to check the dreadful tide,
That rolls its dark and deadly depths along,
Through all the ages, and o'er all the tribes
Of human life, and still must ever roll,
Deepening and darkening till the day of doom.—

Too late ! to check it by our feeble power,
Or wisdom, holiness or sacrifice !
We tremble at the flood's resistless might,
And cry aloud, " O God, all wise and good,
How could this ruin 'scape thy watchful eye ?
Or flow, with thy consent, through thine own
realms ? "

We stand perplexed, astounded and confused,
Without one glimmer in the dark profound !
Till God's own purpose dawns upon our souls,
The " Sun of Righteousness," at last appears
" With healing in his wings," and life springs up,
A deathless Phœnix, victor over death !

But if too late we reach the secret source,
To check the stream of universal woe,
Well will it be, for our own private weal,
To check its earliest entrance to our souls.

Adieu, fair world!—a fond and brief adieu !
We voyagers through trackless depths of space,
To unknown worlds, hope to return ere long,
With deeper lore, and wiser love for thee.

O Father of our spirits, grant, we pray,
Deliverance by thy spirit to our souls,
For brief excursion from this world of sense,
And convoy strong, until our safe return.
O sacred Pneuma, Ruah of the past,
The Breath that breathed us mortals into life,
Who now a new life doth impart to all
Who willingly resign themselves to thee,

And new name, dear to souls redeemed, hast gained,
The Holy Ghost, the sacred Paraelete,
Dwelling entempled in the sanctified,
Ensphere us with thyself, and bear aloft;
For 'tis in Thee we live and move on earth,
And, borne by Thee, our souls may safely fly
Through empty space, void of the breath of life.

Casting our souls thus safely on his hands,
Our poor heads pillow'd on his loving arm,
We mount, we know not how, nor even see
The earth depart, so quickly is it fled.
Yet note we first the vast blue arch of heaven
With fleecy clouds o'erspread, lit up with light,
Gentle and sweet as from an unseen moon.

But soon above the clouds, beyond the moon,
We speed, like light, for fifty million miles,
And soon discern the ruddy face of Mars,
Looming, yet in a moment gone.

This quickly past, confusion seems to reign,
For, flashing by us, as on wings of light,
And darting hither, thither, right and left,
Metereolites, or Asteroids fly past,
And, whizzing near us with a fiery blaze,
And long broad trail of light, a comet speeds
Its strange erratic course. Soon pass we all,
And then the mighty orb of Jupiter,
With belts so broad, and moons so beautiful,
Then Saturn with her silvery rings, and moons
And then Uranus, also Neptune, then!

With fond regret we turn to view these worlds,
Associated by the deep decree of heaven,
Each by familiar neighborhood so bound
In common interest, lighted by one sun,
Yet knowing naught of other's weal or woe.
O worlds of teeming life, of hopes and fears
And fond affections, busy brains, and hands,
How little think ye of the eyes that gaze
From lofty heights upon your wild career !
How mad upon the present ! how remiss
Concerning future welfare ! how untaught
By past experience ! yea how blind and deaf,
To notes and signs of warning from above.

And now we launch upon a shoreless sea,
Without a bottom, surface, current, wave !
No azure dome conceals the topless height,
No land or earthly seas, the infinite depths,
No dim horizon shuts the prospect in,
No sound disturbs the awful solitude,
No life appears, no atmosphere pervades
The abyssmal spaces, nor do clouds reflect
The scattered light, and thus illuminate
The solemn darkness of the night profound.
No pale faced moon sends forth her gentle rays—
Our old familiar sun has dwindled down,
Until his fiery disk is almost lost,
A mere, faint speck of dim uncertain light !
Vanished, long since his planetary worlds.

But all around, on every side,—before,

Behind, above, below, with steady light,
Shine countless hosts of stars ! Our souls seem lost
In infinite heights, for as we gaze below
On that strange sight, of stars beneath our feet,
In place of vanished earth, thought lies confused,
And momentary sickness fills the heart.

An awful dread of all the dreary void
Pervades the soul. We even dread the stars,
That gaze upon us with their sleepless eyes,
And seem to read our thoughts, themselves involved
In mystery profound, so cold, so mute,
Without the faintest whisper of a sound,
With solemn stillness, glaring through the gloom.

But soon, recovered, we discern with joy
Familiar stars to guide us on our way,
Nor do we find, although so far removed
Beyond the orbit of our solar worlds,
Their constellated places wholly changed.
In distances so vast these changes grow
By slow degrees. Our solar system speeds
A hundred million miles, and more, each year
From Canis Major and Orion, yet
The dwindling of their space is scarce perceived,
And scarcely more the openings of space,
In constellations which our worlds approach.

But whither shall we steer ? or shall we drift
Without a pilot, compass, chart or port ?
The answer comes ; for, by the dim star light,
We now discern, with more accustomed eyes,

A spiritual form, that safely guides
The spirit bark, in which our spirits sail.
E'en so Elijah's chariot of flame,
Was visible to one of spirit power.
With deepest veneration we regard
The angel presence. Has he heart of love,
Like human heart, and mind to comprehend
Our human needs, and power to grant us aid ?”
We speak :

“ O angel spirit, in thy care,
Our souls explore, the wondrous works of God.
And, sent by him, thou’rt surely wise and good.
Tell us, we pray thee, thy celestial name ;
And whither dost thou guide our aerial bark ?”

“ My heavenly name is kept from mortal ears ;
And names by mortals given, e'en to the stars
Of heathen heroes, gods, and goddesses,
Are uttered not in heaven. God giveth all
True names, more worthy of his heavenly praise.
The constellations, too, are not the groups
They seem to earthly eyes, but distant stars,
Along the range of human sight seem near,
And nearer, wide apart : yet do they serve
As useful waymarks in earth’s annual course.
Our way lies due north-east, the same your sun,
With all his planets, steadily pursues.
We but out-speed his flight. But would you see
Your splendid luminary now ? Behold,
Far, far below us in our upward flight.
Mark ye yon twinkling light. It is your Sol.

A new star added to the Southern Cross !
Already is it in fourth magnitude ;—
His convoyed worlds long vanished. Then observe
How rearward constellations seem to close
The stars of lesser magnitude fade out.
The greater, dwindling, gradually approach.
Thus different constellations blend in one.
Observe too all around us, still below,
(Though at an angle scarcely ten degrees
Below th' horizon's place) yon starry hosts
Discern ye not the old familiar signs ?
There, on our left, see Aries lead the van.
Next fiery Taurus, charging in hot haste.
Bright Aldebaran glitters in his eye,
And, in his neck, the gentle Pleiades
Shed forth their influence sweet. Alcyone,
That wondrous star, their central light, so dim
As scarce to claim a thought from mortal minds,
Shines with the light of sixteen thousand suns !
Amazing fact: Which well deserves the place
It has in minds of wise astronomers.
No other star, within the ken of man,
Or in the range of his arithmetic,
Shines with such glorious, such transcendent light.
Wise men have wondered if this light (unseen
By earth's great multitudes, and yet so vast
Beyond all others in th' expanse of heaven),
Be not the central sun around which all
Revolve, subservient, with attendant worlds !
And some have thought the very throne of God

Doth shine like that, and in such central place.
An ‘influence sweet,’ indeed, which none can bind,
Is that which issues from God’s holy throne.
But clouds and darkness still are round about,
Although God dwells in light none can approach ;
Nor heaven, nor heaven of heavens can him contain

But press we on ; nor can we stay to mark
The varying splendors of the starry host;
For ‘one star diff’reth from another star
In glory.’ Yet alike, they all declare
The greater glory of the Lord of Hosts.
In lustrous hues of green, and blue, and gold,
Some strangely shine ; and sometimes double suns
Revolving round each other, claim our thought ;
And nebulous clouds condense and flame in stars.
E’en so at night, across the wat’ry deep,
You see a distant city’s clustering lights,
At first a dim faint line, a nebulous glow
But, as you nearer draw, each single light
Shines out, distinct, with splendor of its own.

“Now turn your eyes to yonder glorious host,
Towards which we hold our course. It lies between
Draco, and Ursa Minor, on our left,
Bootes, and Ursa Major, on our right.
The second holds the Pole Star to our gaze,
So long the guide of earthly mariners,
Arcturus, with his sons, adorns the third.
But pass we all, though rich with wonders too,
For lo ! Yon wondrous stellar galaxy,

In Hercules, sublime and beautiful
Beyond all praise, beyond the power of words
To utter forth, attracts our transeéd sight.

“Thither we bend our course. Wise men have said
They scarce, at first, could view the wondrous scene,
Without a shout of wonder and delight.
A host of brilliant suns, outvieing each
The other in their glorious beauty, join,
A splendid fleet upon the dark expanse.

“And seest thou one, that shines pre-eminent?
O Lucifer! ‘Son of the Morn,’ alas!
How art thou fallen from thy high estate!
Among the highest of the Sons of God,
Glory and honor, once were richly thine.
Now, worst and lowest of his wretched foes,
Thy glory and thy bliss forever lost,
Thou’rt doomed to darkness, and to fell despair!”

While speaking thus the angel steers our bark
Direct for that fair world. Increasing light
Greets our approach, clearer and clearer still.
The gloom of night departs, and brightest day
Bursts on our view, too bright for eyes
Of mortal mould, and only spirits pure
Could long endure its heart-revealing power!
Ten thousand suns blaze in this wondrous sky,
And yon strange world, itself a glowing Sun,
Knows naught of night, nor eve, nor morn, nor noon.

O wondrous world! As we approach, thy light,
That seemed so fierce, dissolves in tenderness

Through atmosphere so pure, so clear, so sweet,
That to the raptured soul, to see, to breathe,
Were pure delight : but O my trembling soul,
Why art thou filled with dread ? And O fair world
Why sittest thou so solitary, sad,
And like a widow vailed, in face and form ?
A veil of myst'ry, awful and profound,
Is that which hides thee, which I dread to lift,
As if some Gorgon horror were concealed.
And yet I long to know the meaning sad,
Of mystery so dark, in world so bright,
And woe so deep within the home of bliss.
“ Lead on, O angel guide, and show me all.”

Down from our lofty height our bark descends,
And lo, beneath our feet we see, enshrined,
Perpetual desolation in the home
Of beauty, such as Eden never saw,
Unfading day, unmarred by clouds or storms,
And yet with rich variety of light,
And many a pleasant change, reigns here supreme.
Such day pure spirits only could endure,
Unewarying souls, “ which sleep not, day nor night.”

Descending lower, to our view outspread,
A landscape strange, meets our astonished sight.
The wild luxuriance of nature here,
Exceeds earth's tropic richness, yet subdued,
And chastened, and arranged by art divine,
The mountains blue, which rear their lofty heads,
To fringe the wondrous scene, enclose a vale
Of bliss, beyond what Rasselas revealed,

Fair fields of verdure, groves of deeper green,
And silvery lakes, and streamlets, gleaming bright,
Salute our eyes: but brightest of them all,
Dotting the landscape o'er, with mystic light,
Are star-like spots, we scarce can understand.
Pointing to one outshining all the rest,
We ask our guide,

“ What means yon blaze of light? ”

“ ’Twas Lucifer’s fair capital, long since,
The fairest city in the realms of light.
Forsaken now, and desolate it stands,
Perpetual monument of God’s just wrath
Against his worst and earliest foes! ‘ Behold
The goodness and severity of God ! ’
Could aught more blest or beautiful be found,
Than this fair world, gem of the starry host,
All radiant with the glory of the Lord ?
Yet sinful discontent hath entered here,
And robbed its blest inhabitants of bliss.
O dreadful doom of those, who, once so high
Stood in the favor of Almighty God,
Now hurled to Hell’s abyss of shame and woe,
Sinking by natural gravity of sin,
To deeper depths of hellish wickedness,
And most malignant enmity to God.

“ Alas, alas, that spirits formed to rise
To loftier heights of majesty and bliss,
Nearer the throne of God, the Source of good,
Should choose a false and evil way, that leads,—
Through devious paths of stubbornness, and sin,

Selfish ambition, discontent, and pride,—
Down to the shades of death and fell despair.”

“But how could these things be?” We ask our guide.
“How could sin issue from a fountain pure?
Or how be entertained by sinless souls?
Or how, without a father, was it born ?”

“Thou askest questions deep, of mysteries dark,
And hard to comprehend, nor is it yet
To sinful man by revelation given
To learn the souree of sin ;—enough to know
Its dreadful power and doom ;—yet I may tell
The sinful aet that brought the penalty
Upon the dwellers in these homes of light,
Of banishment eternal from those homes,
And from the blessed presence of the Lord.
Then you, perchance, may guess how sin was born

“When God first breathed these spirits into life
He linked them not, as yours, to carnal forms.
Yet names and ‘local habitations’ gave,
Sense to discern the beautiful and true,
And souls to love, and to rejoice in good,
And gave them ‘richly all things to enjoy.’

“Endowed with power to soar to distant worlds,
They had the hope permission would be given,
And yet were taught to wait the will of God.
At first no other thoughts than those of love,
And gratitude, and loyalty to God
Possessed their souls, and perfect joy was theirs,

And oft their bliss to highest rapture rose.
But curiosity, too oft indulged,
To roam th' inviting fields of boundless space,
And visit other fair and glittering worlds,
And thus to grow in knowledge, more like God,
At length, o'ercame their scruples, and inspired
Their fervent souls with wishes and with hopes,
Growing to smouldering sparks of strange desire.
Thus contemplation of forbidden things
Is dangerous to peace and purity.
If duty bids us view them, wisdom cries,
'Beware of fond desire.' 'Tis this gives birth
To sin, and, unrestrained, itself is sin.
The scout who reconnoitres hostile camps
Must be alert, and vigilant, or else,
Slain, or a captive he may end his war.
Basest of all, and most unfaithful he,
Who tampers with the foe, and traitor proves,
And turns an enemy to once loved friends.

"The strong desires of these unhappy souls,
Bred discontent with all their purest joys,
And turned the sweetest cup to bitterness.
They brooded o'er their lot of close constraint,
And soon began to utter forth their griefs,
Each in the other's willing ear, and thus,
Kindled, by mutual heat, the fiercest flames
Bursting through all restraint, and bringing death
To holy aspirations, love, and peace.

"At length, in general conclave, they decreed

An expedition to explore the depths
Of infinite space, and visit other worlds."

While speaking thus, the angel steers our bark
Down to the very suburbs of the place,
Ere we, absorbed with his strange tale, observe
The splendor of the scene.

At last we land.

And lo ! Amazing sight ! magnificence
Sublimity, and beauty richly joined !
An unwalled city lies before our eyes,
Shining with splendor, far beyond the power
Of language to convey, or human sight
Undazzled to behold. But spirits pure
Could view unhurt, with infinite delight.
No dingy factories, nor toiling mills
Pour forth their smoke and steam, to foul the air
No low-roofed shops, nor filthy tenements
Arise to mar the beauty of the scene.
Naught to defile or to offend is there,
In all that wondrous city's vast extent ;
But stately edifices, fair, and grand,
And domes, and steeples towering toward the skies
Of temples or of halls of science fair !
The humblest dwellings to our wondering eyes
Seem splendid palaces, which kings of earth
Might view with envious eyes,
Yet in such varying styles, proportions, hues
And mystic hints of architectural art,
Kaleidoscopic power could scarce excel.

Awhile we view, with wonder and delight.
But soon our souls are filled with deepest dread,
By sense of desolation, deep and dire,
Proclaiming everlasting wrath divine.

Mysterious stillness rests upon the place,
Oppressing every sense with solemn awe.
It is not that we miss the noisy stir,
The rumbling and the roar of business life ;
For well we deem that spirits need not toil
In earthly merchandise, nor urge their teams
With clumsy vehicles, and heavy loads
Through crowded, dusty streets. Far other toils
And other pleasures fill their busy lives.
Nor is the silence that of drowsy night,
Subduing every sense with slumbers sweet ;
For e'en the deepest night has some relief
In living sound ; but night is absent here ;
Perpetual day illumines the city's towers.
Yet silence, most oppressive reigns—the gloom,
The dreadful gloom of stillness, worse than night,
That testifies of spiritual death !
Too deep for lamentation or for tears
The pulseless grief, that reigns unuttered here—
Darker than weeds of widowhood the woe,
Where e'en the signs of mourning are forbid,
And shame abides with grief,—in silence sealed.

With trembling step we press the empty streets,
And view with wonder each mysterious sign
Of undecaying wrath, inscribed so plain

On every stone, that he who runs may read,
 No grass, nor weeds start from the unused pave
 And in neglected gardens gay with flowers,
 Cultured and trained, as if by constant care,
 No thorns, nor thistles curse the virgin soil.
 No moss nor lichen, fasten on the stones.
 Dilapidation finds no entrance here ;
 And all corroding time in vain attempts
 To fix the print of his remorseless teeth
 On forms here made impervious to decay.
 But rottenness, and ruin, mould, and taint,
 Though causing deep disgust, were cheerful sights
 Compared to this deep, monumental woe,
 This dreadful perpetuity of doom.
 Amazed, we stand and view with heavy hearts
 The empty palaces, and lonely streets,
 O'erwhelmed to think, that, in this city vast,
 So full of splendor, not a soul remains,
 Where once, celestial forms, preëminent
 For dignity and beauty, thronged the streets,
 And voices loud, of gladness, and the notes
 Of music filled the air, and happy hearts,—
 Thrilled with an inexpressible delight,—
 Sang loud

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

“Where are they now ?” We ask our silent guide.
 And “What the issue of their strange decree ?
 And why return they not ?”

“Alas !” said he,
 One who decrees within his inmost soul,

Against the firm decree of highest heaven,
Parts company forever from its bliss,
Unless redeemed by all transcendent grace !
The boatman, with his oar against the beach,
And pushing hard, moves not the solid land ;
(Can finite, then o'er infinite prevail !)
Himself he separates, and swift the tide
Bears him away, unless his power and will
Bring him again. But nature here forbids.
As well might one, dropped from mid air, remount
The lost balloon, as spirits lost regain
Rejected blessings, by their power alone,
What they decreed—they did ;—not one by one,
Each for himself alone, or drawing on
Involuntary sharers in their doom,
(Heirs of their woe, though free from actual sin,)
But joined in deep conspiracy in guilt,
Deliberately they planned, and boldly dared,
'Left their own habitations !' and forsook
The guardianship, and favor of their God !

* * * *

“ And now these palaces are closed and sealed,
Adorned with all things beautiful and good,
Imperishable signs of righteous wrath,
Remembered (Oh so bitterly) in Hell,
With vain regrets, and wrath most impotent,
Begetting deeper hate, and darker woe ! ”

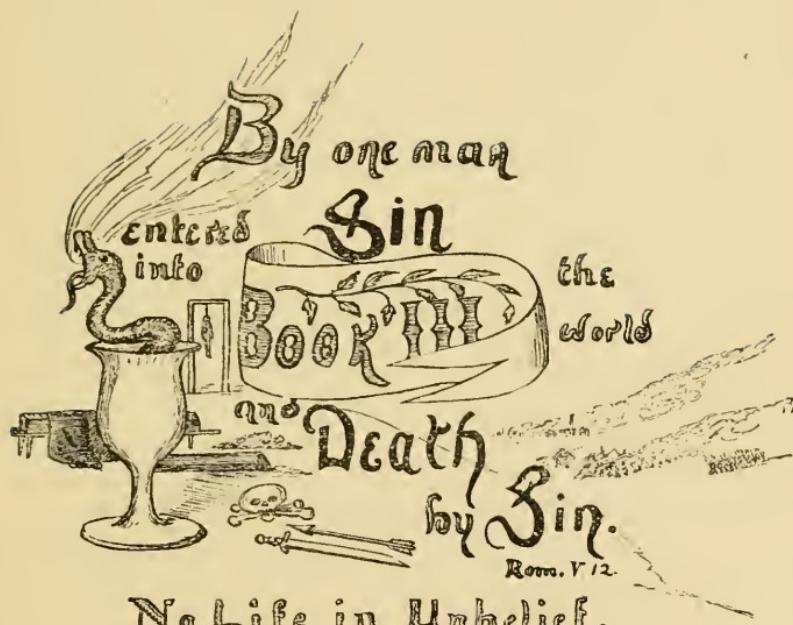
“ Oh turpitude of folly ! ” we exclaim
“ Oh folly indescribable of sin ! ”

Oh myst'ry of iniquity! Oh base
Ingratitude! rebellion! Wild self will!
How could intelligent and happy souls
So far forsake their senses, joy, and peace,
And leave the certain for uncertainty,
Distrusting One all Faithful, Wise and True,
And making ill returns to One All Good?"

"Such is the power of sin," our guide replies.
"It makes the ill seem good, and darkness light,
And folly wisdom, and th' uncertain sure,
Blinding the eyes and hardening every heart.

"But do not mortals make the same strange choice,
Though opposite in form, in essencee one?
They leave not heaven possessed, but cling to earth
In which (forbidden to abide) they dwell
As if forever, while they seek not Heaven,
Where God invites them to abide with him.
They love the world, though full of sin and woe,
More than they love their God, or Heaven itself,
So full of perfect bliss, and set their wills
Against the firm decree of changeless fate."

*"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for
the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."
Jude 21st.*



PROEM.

O thou blest Fount, from which all being springs,
Author and End of all created things,
Unnumbered worlds thy sovereign will obey,
And own thy boundless and resistless sway.
Goodness and wisdom, equally are thine ;
In every world and glittering star they shine,
Thy creatures well may trust thy guiding mind,
And seek in thee their happiness to find.
No power nor wisdom may thy will defeat.
“Out of the eater thou canst bring forth meat.”
Thy will supreme, supremely good, and wise,
Even from evil bids the good arise.
But woe to him who dares thy power defy,
We read “the soul that sinneth it shall die.”
Obedience to thee is man’s first law,
Who from thy hand his just reward must draw,
To dwell with thee his most exalted hope,
To know thy will his wisdom’s utmost seope.
To serve thee here is now his sweetest joy,
And soon in Heaven shall be his blest employ.
What then the happy secret herein taught,
The “Summum Bonum,” long by sages sought,
Of man ? What ends the doubtful strife ?
‘Tis this, “*In thy true favor is his life,*”—
“*Better than life thy loving kindness is :*”—
To love and dwell with Thee, his highest bliss.

BOOK THIRD.

Return we now to Earth, forbid to trace,
Through devious ways, the dark and downward
course

Of spirits banished, by their own free act,
From God's blest presence, and celestial homes,
And doomed, like wandering stars, to endless night
Whose blackest darkness is for them reserved.
Night settled on their inmost souls,—the night
Of gloom and deep despair, and bitterest wrath,
That comes from conscious enmity to God ;—
Their chief delight henceforth to thwart the will
Of Him who wills the highest weal of all.

And now (alas for man!) we find them here,
In this fair world of innocence and peace,
To kindle war in guileless human hearts,
And unrelenting enmity to God.

Alas! Alas! must men then live unwarned ?
Nay, warning first was given from God himself,
What warning more could men receive than this,
God's word.

“The soul that sinneth it shall die ?”

It grieves to tell the sad and shameful tale
Of man's forgetfulness of God and truth,
And all the woe that from his sin ensued.

Yet sin must be exposed, and thus condemned,
That grace and truth may triumph over all.

Behold we then, once more, the happy pair,
Whose bud of joy hath blossomed into bliss.
No blight seems near, nor can they dream of ill,
Where all seems good.

But ah ! could they foresee
The dreadful train of sorrows, pains, and sins,
The long, long years of war, and want, and woe,
That must ensue from their first act of sin,
'Twould cast a shadow o'er their present bliss,
Or waken in their hearts such firm resolve
Temptation to resist, and sin to shun,
As hellish art might seek in vain to shake.
Ah no ! such foresight is not given. 'Tis ours
To hear the word divine, and, if we heed,
Ours is the great reward. But unbelief
Beclouds the vision, hides the heavenly world,
Muffles the ears to harmonies divine,
Smothers all holy thoughts and pure desires,
Kills heavenly aspirations, heavenly hopes,
And all divine affections ; gratitude,
And true repentance, with its healing balm,
And happy sense of reconciling grace;
And peace, sweet peace, pure, deep and full,
"The world can neither give nor take away,"
Forth flowing from the very throne of God ;
And joy in God, sublime and holy joy,
A joy which oft with heavenly rapture glows,
And filial love to God for love received.

Faith may be deemed, by some, a feeble sense,
Scarce able to perceive with certainty
The things invisible to fleshly eyes,—
And love, a slender cord to bind once more
The soul of man, once parted from his God.
But unbelief destroys that feeble sense—
Extinguishes the faint and glimmering ray
That leads obedient souls to clearer light,
Quenches the feeble spark, that, fanned, would burn
To bright and glowing flames, and cuts the cord
Upholding trusting souls, like bands of steel.
Sad unbelief brings no refreshment sweet
To souls that thirst for showers of heavenly grace.
The clouds of unbelief are dismal clouds,
That hold no water, desolating clouds
That tender shoots of vegetation blast,
E'en as the dread simoon, or sulphurous smoke
That issues from some dark voleanic pit.
Dark unbelief confers no benefit
On man, quickens no faculties for good,
Brings no emancipation from the bad,
No true illumination, no true strength,
Kindles no true ambition, no desire
To raise immortal souls from depths of sin,
Denying self that others may be blest.
It shows not heavenly worlds, nor leads the way
But magnifies the fleeting now of time,
Not to ensure a blest eternity,
But more to hide it from the guilty mind.
Thus unbelief perverts the moral sense,

Withdraws the soul from all its noblest aims,
Diverts it from its proper centre, God,
Belittles life, and desolates the heart!

But, worst of all, it scorns the incarnate Word,
Of mercy, grace, and truth, and love divine,
It calls the holy word of God, a lie,
And, with satanic arrogance, it pours
Contempt on sacred things, and all that's good,
Defies the wrath of heaven, rejects its love,
Struts out its little day, and dies! accursed !

The Word of God embalms great acts of faith,
Of mighty prowess, and of power divine,
Which won true titles of nobility,
And shining names that nevermore may fade.
But one sad act of sinful unbelief
Brought ruin on the race, and shame and woe,
Which no mere mortal ever could repair.

One summer day Eve wanders forth alone,
In artless innocence, and thoughtless glee,
Holding sweet conference with each bright eyed bird
That tunes its softest notes at her approach,
And flowers that blush with tenderest delight.
She dreams bright day dreams of dear love and hope,
Unconscious all of foe or danger near.

Now is the Tempter's opportunity !
With eager eyes, quick to discern his prey,
As cruel hawk his quarry from the skies,
He sees, and swift, descends with hellish joy,

Yet needs in spiritual ambush hide
From Eve's clear eyes of innocence, the while
He watches every step, and lures her on,
By slow degrees, down to her dreadful doom.
Alone, uncounselled, weak, and innocent,
She follows, like a lamb to slaughter led.

Oh Adam ! where art thou ? At home ? asleep ?
Or busy with the garden's pleasant cares ?
Absorbed with problems recondite and vast,
Or wrapt in meditation so profound
Thou dost not miss thy dear companion's voice ?
Alas ! Alas ! woe worth the dreadful day
That left thy dearest treasure so unkept !

Eve's steps, by curious gravitation drawn,
Now tend, insensibly, to that dread spot
Which truest wisdom taught her steps to shun.
Yet dreams she not of treason to her God,
Though fast the Tempter's arts beguile her soul.

Astonished at the sight of that fair tree,
Laden with fruits so strange and beautiful,
She stops and views it with devouring eyes.

Still sweetly sing the birds a song of peace ;
But Eve stands trembling, while she longs to taste,
With lips apart, flushed cheeks, and fluttering heart,
With God's dread prohibition in her mind.
And now she feels the first faint trace of doubt
Of love and goodness in the Lord she loved.
Ah not in vain was Satan's whispering,

That God had needless laid a hard restraint.
But as she gazes through the branches fair,
She sees there, gliding, sinuous through the leaves,
A lithesome creature, glittering in the sun,
With hues most charming to a stranger's eye,
And feasting on the fruits, well pleased, and safe.

"How darest thou," she cries, "transgress God's law?"

Knowest thou thy doom? The eater is to die,—
Some dreadful doom I scarce can comprehend."

At this the wily serpent seems to laugh
A merry laugh, though mingled with contempt,
For Satan now a full possession held,
And serpent-form becomes his type henceforth.
And while the birds still sing their song of peace,
A gentle murmur issues from the tree,
Produced, no doubt, by some satanic art,
Causing the serpent's tongue appear to speak.

"Oh Eve, behold me at my happy feast,
Unharmed I eat, and grow divinely wise.
Hath God then said, ye 'shall not eat' as well?
Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know
That ye shall be as Gods,—wise to discern
With open eyes the evil from the good;
Taste for thyself, and know my words are true
A being like thyself, God-like and fair,
Beyond all creatures on the earth, must know
More than the crawling worm. And yet, behold,

I now perceive, more clearly than thyself,
My rights, my safety, and my happiness."

Flattered, and piqued, and filled with strong desire,
Seeing the fruit most "pleasing to the eyes,"
And "good for food, and much to be desired
To make one wise," Eve ventures near the tree
With hesitating steps, and stretches forth
Her trembling hands, and plucks and tastes the
fruit!

And still the birds sing on their song of peace,

But lo! her husband calls her cherished name!
And in a moment, following in her steps,
He sees her standing at the fatal tree!

Astonished at the sight, he stands appalled!
Transfixed, amazed, heart chilled, with fear, and woe!

At length he cries

"Oh Eve! My soul, my life,
How sportest thou with death? Hast thou forgot?
Or darest thou resist the will of God?
Art thou more wise than he? Dost thou defy
The threatened doom of those who disobey?
Where, now, is all the love and gratitude
Thou ow'st to him who made all nature good,
And gave thee all things richly to enjoy,
And only said 'Thou must not taste of this?'Alas! alas! thy heart hath been deceived!
And, oh my soul, what woe doth now betide?"

Eve, startled at his call, had almost dropped
The fatal fruit, with sense of shame and guilt,
But seeing now his piteous grief and fear,
She even smiled at such excess of woe,
Deeming herself enlightened and unharmed,
And saying in her heart

“ Mistaken soul !

He, ignorant, imagines all is lost :
But I have wiser grown, and soon will cure
His causeless grief.”

“ Oh Adam ! why so dazed ?

Dismiss thy fears, and listen to my words.
This tree of knowledge I have tasted now,
My eyes are opened, and I feel no harm.
Let me instruct thee, and persuade thee too.
No fruit yet tasted so affects the mind,
My soul expanded, soars to loftier realms.
I seem to walk on air, to breathe new life,
I better understand the secret laws
Which hold the universe in harmony.
I view no longer here a solitude,
But see the world, in vision, filled with souls,
And other worlds replete with sentient life.
Come eat with me. Thy soul shall vie with mine
To press through this new gate of knowledge fair.”

Thus, with persuasive accents, Eve allures
The man she loves to venture to his doom.
Her charming voice, dying in melody,
Blends sweetly with the chorus of the birds
That still sing happily their song of peace.

Filled with contending thoughts, poor Adam stands,
And gazes in the lovely eyes of her
For whose dear sake he willingly would die.
But shall he contravene the will of God ?
Betray the trust reposed in him by heaven ?
Declare himself unworthy of that trust ?
Renounce allegiance to his rightful king ?
Cast off the crown of God's paternal love ?
Defy God's wrath ? Incur the taint of sin ?
And forfeit hope of everlasting life ?

Ah not so clearly Adam understands
The full extent of Eve's rash act of sin,
Or for himself anticipates the woe,
The shame and guilt of yielding now to her
He only knows 'tis wrong to disobey,
And fears some dreadful evil must ensue.
He hesitates, and Eve renews her plea,
And urges him to eat for her dear sake.

"Taste, Adam dear, and share my weal or woe,
Thou sure wilt not forsake the wife you love,
And leave her now to bear the doom alone—
(If doom there be) for eating harmless fruit—
Thou couldst not see me die (and thou go free)
Or suffer pain without thy loving aid.
Or, if my soul depart, thou coulds't not stay
In Eden's bliss, and feel no pang of grief.
Where is the love thou hast so fondly sworn ?
And where thy courage to endure for me ?"

These words, with fond caresses, and with looks

Of sweet entreaty beaming from bright eyes,
That sometimes swim with tears, the while they
gazed

So pleadingly in his, as if to read
His inmost mind and soul, sweep all reserve
From Adam's heart, and melt his steadfast will,
E'en as the sun dissolves the icy bands
That bind the rivers in the early spring.

He now regards at last the tempting fruit,
Held forth by gentle hands of her he loves.

Oh Heaven and Earth ! Forbid the dreadful crime
By which he now casts off the hand of God,
Upholding, guiding, loading him with bliss,
And takes of Satan's proffered bait of sin !

Too late ! alas ! he takes the fatal fruit !
He tastes ! and Satan's triumph is complete !

Heaven hears the tidings with dismay and grief,
And hollow, mocking laughter rings through Hell.

But chiefly earth, could she foresee the woe,
And dreadful desolation, sin and crime
That must ensue, how would she now lament
And clothe herself in sackcloth black as night.

But no. The birds still sing their song of peace,
And nature smiles, as if man still were blest !
And Adam smiles ! He feels no inward pain
Save some remorseful throes which conscience gives ;
But finds his senses quickened to discern

The good and evil, yet unknown before.
Yet little peace forbidden knowledge brings.
A sense of shame creeps through his fallen soul,
A consciousness of new and strange desires,
That bring him more of torment than of bliss.
He cannot walk unchallenged now of wrong,
Nor seek with joy his Maker's smiling face,
Nor find his chief delight to do his will.
Self has usurped his Sovereign's rightful throne,
And selfish joys, and fears, and noxious cares
Now take the place of innocent delight,
And filial confidence, and childlike trust.
He even dreads the holy twilight hour,
Sweet hour of prayer that ends the busy day,
Wooing the weary soul, with influence sweet,
To hold communion with its father,—God.
O sacred hour, sweet link of earth to heaven !
Thou'rt surely blessed of God, and sent by him
To shed rich blessings on the waiting souls,
Of those who love him and go forth to meet
His coming at the holy evening tide.
What glory does thy waning light unfold
To wondering eyes, in its dissolving hues
That tell of Heaven, as this world fades from sight,
The gathering gloom that vails the things of earth
Unfolds the glittering worlds that lift our thoughts
To things unseen, “ eternal in the heavens.”

But Adam dreads to meet his injured Lord !
Alas ! how changed since erst he longed to see

The face of him he loved, and hailed the hour
That brought his highest bliss!

So sin corrupts

The soul of man, and spoils his purest joys,
E'en as a little taint, most wholesome food,
Or as the East wind blasts the tenderest plants.
The highest privilege of holy souls
Becomes an irksome task, a trial dread,
To those whose hearts are turned away from God.

So Adam finds. The Lord comes down at eve
With richest blessings for expectant souls,
For he is able,—more than willing too,—
To bless his trustful children whom he loves.

But Adam hastes to hide himself in shame !
Ah ! Who can long conceal himself from God ?
One may indeed awhile avoid the light
And blind himself to God's all seeing eye,
But vain the hope to blind the eye of God,
Or God's omniscience ever to deeeive.

The voicee of God rings through his dark retreat,
Startling his soul.

“ O Adam, where art thou ? ”
O question hard, for wandering souls to hear,
And harder still to answer well to God.
Yet happy he who honest answer gives,
And turns, at Heaven's first call, from ways of sin.
Timely let each th' important question ask
“ Where art thou, O my soul ? ”

A dweller here

In God's own world, by God's great mercy spared,
A few short years of mingled grief and joy,
An heir of woe, but candidate for Heaven,
Art thou on pilgrimage, or wandering still?
Art thou among his foes or followers found?
Where is thy heart? In union sweet with God,
Or firmly fixed on fleeting visions here?
And where, at last, will be thy chosen place,
At God's right hand, with those that love their Lord,
Or on the left, to hear the doom, "Depart?"

Ah, with a tremor, Adam hears the call,
His guilt confessed e'en by his shame and fear,
And by his vain attempt to hide from God.
Even his manhood fails him in this hour,
As fail it must when God appears to judge.
He fain would hide himself behind God's gift,
And blame the giver, and the gift so dear.

"The woman tempted whom thou gavest me!"

For shame, O man! In vain thy mean excuse!
Vain all thy pleas and poor excuses now.
The terrible but just decree goes forth,
That dooms thy life to toil and sorrow here,
Cursing the very ground for sin so great,
And banishing thy soul from God's blest face.

What sorrow theirs, so late supremely blest,
Who hear their doom from him whom they adore,
And know their sentence just, without appeal!
O dreadful fruit of sin! brief joy! small gain!

O woful joy ! O gain most ruinous !
It costs them Paradise, their own souls' peace,
God's smiling face, his "favor which is life,"
And "loving kindness better far than life!"

The night descends, the quiet holy night,
That like a benediction falls from heaven,
When souls have listened to the Master's word.
But, ah, how solemn is its coming now !
O gathering gloom of time's most awful night
(When God pronounced the dreadful doom of sin),
Save when the day itself to night was turned,
And God's own Son bore, by himself, the curse.

Speechless and petrified with grief and fear
Our father stands, bearing with trembling limbs,
The fainting form of his beloved wife.
Where shall he look for help or comfort now ?
His bursting heart must inly breathe the prayer
His lips can not yet utter

"O my God
Forgive thy servant's sin ! My doom is just.
Yet, O my Father, in thy righteous wrath
Remember mercy. O my Sovereign, spare !
Slay not this dear companion of my life !
My God ! my God ! Wilt thou forsake thine own ?
Shall we no more behold thy smiling face ?
No more perceive thy blissful presence near ?
Nor hear thy gentle voice in accents sweet,
To guide and counsel, and to soothe our fears ?
O Father, if from this dear Paradise

We must go banished forth, yet doom us not
To banishment eternal from thy face !
Let not the Tempter triumph ! yield us not
Into the cruel hands of this thy foe."

The God of mercy hears this earnest prayer,
And mingles mercy with his cup of wrath,
Declaring how the woman's seed shall bruise
The serpent's head, and final victory gain,
Though suffering greatly in the dreadful strife.
But oh the depth of meaning in that word,
"The woman's seed!" how can their poor hearts
guess

The infinite love that shares their dreadful woe,
Sharing their very nature,—undefiled,—
And even condescends to bear their guilt !
All, all seems dark, and stern, and dreadful now,
Nor can they see their Father's loving face
Behind the dreadful vail of rayless night,
Nor well discern or taste of mercy now,
Mixed in their cup of overflowing woe.

With heavy, heavy hearts they bid farewell,
A sad and last farewell to Paradise,—
Their happy, happy home,—and, driven forth
By flaming swords, which guard the way of life,
They seek, amidst the gloom of deepening night,
Some refuge in the world's wide wilderness,
Some place of safe retreat, where they may find
A brief oblivion from their dreadful grief.
No more they think of beauties, or of bowers,

Adorned for every innocent delight,
 They only seek some place to hide their shame,
 To rest their weary limbs and aching heads,
 To still the painful tumult of their hearts,
 To lay aside their heavy load of grief,
 To banish from their minds distressful thought,
 And, for a season e'en forget themselves.

But oh ! the darkest night can ne'er conceal
 The guilt and shame convicted souls must feel,
 And sweet forgetfulness is wooed in vain
 By those whose very souls are racked with pain.

“The spirit of a man,” in purity,
 And love to God, “bears his infirmity,”
 And casts upon his Father every care:
 But oh ! “a wounded spirit who can bear ?”

EVE'S LAMENT.

O weary heart, so sore, so sad,
 Canst thou, henceforth, no more be glad ?
 How can I live, with hope laid low ?
 How bear, and yet conceal my woe ?

Dear, happy, home, of pure delight,
 So full of beauty, love, and light,
 So full of innocence, and glee,
 Art thou, henceforth, now closed to me ?

And art thou closed, O Heart Divine
 Whose love was, late, so freely mine ?
 Must I, from thy sweet presence torn,
 Henceforth perpetual exile mourn ?

O burdened soul, weighed down with grief !
Where dwelleth succor or relief ?
With God so grieved ? now hid from sight ?
Or him whose life thy sin doth blight ?

My mind is dazed ! I cannot think !
I seem to stand upon the brink
Of darkness, death, and deep despair :
But speak my woe ? How can I dare ?

Why should I add my sorrows' weight
To his, who shares my lost estate,
And shares it through his love to me,
Whose folly brought such misery ?

Why did I heed the Tempter's voice ?
Why make the sad and fatal choice,
When love, and goodness all divine,
Had made such priceless treasures mine ?

Yes priceless treasures !—Mine no more !
Joy, fresh from him whom I adore,
Heaven's peace, and stainless purity,
Now lost,—to all futurity !

Yet hope still glimmers e'en for me,
Hope in my own posterity,
Hope of a Promised, Holy, Seed,
For me to conquer,—yet to bleed !

Lord keep thy word, and speed the day !
Oh may my sons thy laws obey !
And may they all from me be taught
To scorn the first disloyal thought.

Now from this opening, sad, of earthly woe,
Turn we to scenes more full of hope and joy,
Though mingled, oft, with sorrow, sin, and shame
Behold, once more, our happy mother, Eve
Rejoicing in a joy unknown before.

O precious gift of Heaven ! O token dear
That all is not yet wrath,—that God still smiles,
And e'en with wrath he blends sweet mercy still
The happy mother folds in loving arms,
Against her thankful heart, her first born son,
First born of men, heir of the universe !
The pain and sorrow which his coming caused,
Now all forgot, she sings a song of joy.

“Rejoice ! A man I've gotten,—(lo !) the Lord !”

Does she imagine this the promised seed ?
And that he is indeed Jehovah, Lord ?

Alas ! Alas ! How sad her fond mistake !
Soon must she find life's dreadful war with woe
Has just begun, the triumph yet far off,
For sin and sorrow still must flourish long,
And Satan still prevail on many a field.
Yet sweet the days of innocent delight,
While Cain was still a child, and love and hope
Filled all her heart with purest Mother joy.

The rarest flower her life has ever seen
Now blossoms on her breast, unfolding fair,
With growing sweetness to her happy soul.
The eyes of blue that gaze into her eyes
So wond'ringly, and yet with love and trust,

Charm all her heart, with fascinating power,
The cooing, prattling lips speak to her ears
A language clear and sweet, and on her heart
The tiny tender hands lay hold, with power
Naught can dissolve, through changes great and sad.
Alas ! that change so great should ever be—
And that the infant pure should bear the brand,
In after years, of “Cain !” “first murderer !”

And yet does not the tree its own fruit bear ?
For “thorns do not bear figs,” “nor thistles grapes.”
And souls perverted from the love of God
Bear not the proper fruits of holiness.
But sinful lusts and passions, unrestrained,
Must yield the fruits of heinous sin and crime
Ah well it is that man cannot foresee
All coming woes. “Sufficient to the day
The ill thereof.” Nor should we borrow grief
From sad to-morrows, spoiling present joys,
Or doubling this day’s trial all in vain.
Wise men foresee the ills that may be shunned,
And so, by timely care, such ills avoid.
All else true wisdom trusts to grace divine.

Thus happy now the family of men !
For hope, sweet hope, has dawned upon their souls
Of grace divine, surpassing all their thoughts,
In some way granted through their promised seed.
And joys e’en now, unknown in Paradise,
Come clustering to their humble home without.
For babes appear, like visitants from heaven,

Enkindling love, warm, tender, sweet and pure.
Oh rich the homes where hearts are full of love !
Without it, poor and desolate indeed !
Though rich in all things else that gold can buy.

New graces, too, now blossom in the lives
Of those who knew in bliss no sympathy,
Because they knew no trial, pain, or woe.
For gentle patience, sympathetic grief,
Thoughtful solicitude for others' ills,
And kind forbearance, and forgiving grace,
Strong fortitude, and courage unappalled
By dangers, or disasters, dread and dire,
And, best of all, self sacrificing love,—
Exotic graces, strange to Eden's bowers,
Begin to bear in man their beauteous fruits.
And Heaven itself views, with admiring eyes,
Graces so rare and sweet midst woe and sin.

Not far from Eden, Adam built his home
And full in sight of where the seraphs held
Their flaming swords to guard the holy gates.
And often through the gates were glimpses caught
Of him who showed his glorious presence there.

Thus constant kept in recollection sad
Of all their sins had cost,—reviewing oft
The holy hours of pure supreme delight
They once enjoyed in Eden's blissful bowers,
Where sinless as the lilies, and as fair,
They reigned supreme 'mong all the works of God,
Reverenced and loved by all, as next to God,

Or “little lower than the angels” pure,
Remembering now the greatness of their fall,
And seeing hope of all return cut off,
They daily learn the useful lessons taught,
The guilt of most unprofitable sin,
And true repentence towards their injured Lord.
Each well remembered spot seemed near and dear.
In many a nook their fair companions stood,
Bright blushing roses with their open hearts,
And breathing out the fragrance of their love
At their approach, but waiting now in vain
For their return; and delicate and pale
The lilies of the valley pure and sweet,
Hiding their loveliness in mossy glen,
In deep humility, and yet with joy
So meekly greeting their dear footsteps turned
Oft to their lone retreat with happy love.
Ah, lonely now, they listen never more
To Eve’s sweet innocent talk, so full of praise
And hope and joy! Ah dear this happy spot!
But dearer still those holiest resorts
Where God,—their life,—revealed himself in love!
All nature, in His presence, seemed more bright.
Surcharged with joy, and luminous with smiles.
The very flow’rs breathed holy love to God,
And all the birds sang sweetly to his praise.
But chiefly they who hailed the happy hour,
Which they might spend with their belov’d Lord,
In high communion, intimate and sweet.
These precious, tender mem’ries filled their souls

With strong emotions, far too deep for words,
Whene'er their minds endured the fond review.
And yet they oft desired to turn their souls
Towards Him whom still they loved, and happy hope
Was kindled in their souls of sins forgiven,
And treasures still in store of grace divine
Their Father's smiling face, tho' seen afar,
Gave sweet assurance of good will to men,
Of true, and patient, and forgiving love.

So at the holy meditative hour,
When all the cares of life were laid aside,
They still besought the presence of their God,
And looked with eager love to see his face.

The humble booth which Adam called his home,
Was built of interwoven boughs and thatch,
Well walled without with turf, and lined within
With reeds and palm leaves, and adorned with gems
And precious ore, and curious stones and shells.
The floor was thickly strewn with clean white sand;
Soft mossy beds invited to repose;
And rustic wood supplied the furniture.

Here clustered now the family of man.
Another son, sweet brother for the first,
Gentle, and good, and of his brother fond,
And daughters fair, now joined the family group.
Ringing with life and mirth, the humble cot
Grew daily dearer to the loving hearts
Who in this home share mutual weal or woe.
Richer by far in treasures of the soul

That humble eot than many a palace grand,
Where splendor vain usurps the placee of love.
The cottage door was shaded by a porch
O'er-grown with vines, and looked toward Paradise
'Twas here the family gathered morn and eve,
And, in the presence of their gracious Lord,
Bowed down with reverence, holy love, and joy,
And poured forth all their souls in prayer and
praise:

Oh sweet the hour of prayer,
When God his face reveals,
Who frees the soul from earthly care
And earthly sorrow heals.

Bound by the sacred ties
Of fondest family love,
Our happy souls together rise
Towards yon bright home above.

Well pleased, our Father views
Our offering at his throne,
Nor can his bounteous heart refuse
Our humble suit to own.

He sends his holy Dove
Our happy souls to fill
With purer, more abounding love,
Delighting in his will.

So sped the days. So ran the cireling months
And multiplying labors filled their lives,
Inereasing in the field and in the home.

For toil was Adam's lot, and from his face,
Furrowed with care, oft rolled the trickling drops,
The tribute of his strength adjudged to earth,
Cursed by his sin, reluctant now to yield
A free-will offering to support his life.
But drops of mortal anguish filled the eyes
Of her who first brought sin into the world,
In bringing also life, and bringing hope
Of him, who,—victor over death and sin,—
Should bring eternal life at last to man.

Time hastened on, and still the family grew.
Man's first born son stood by his father's side
Or followed in the field, with sturdy strength.

But Abel, watching his increasing flocks,
Led them in pastures green, by waters still.
And while at noontide, in embowering shade
They sought secure repose, with simple pipes
Discoursed sweet music, often uttering forth
The happy thoughts of grateful heart and mind,
In songs of praise and heavenly love and hope.
And yet,—not all of heaven nor things divine,—
His song discoursed of happy earthly love,
Yet scarcely less divine, so aptly blent
(In strains of sweetest melody and joy),
The love of God, and of his dearest gift
To man on earth, (save when he gave Himself)
The good man's other self, yea more than self,
And more than all the teeming world besides.

Behold the happy shepherd with his flock,

His riches all around, in sweet content.

No sore impatience, no distressing cares

Disturb his thoughts.

Yet why his longing gaze

Aeross the sunny fields, toward yonder grove !

The scene is fair to view, blue skies above,

With banks of summer clouds, and, spread below,

Fair verdant slopes, adorned with autumn flowers,

And gay with butterflies of varied hue.

And overhead, among the branches fair,

Cool breezes sigh, and sweet birds gayly sing,

While sleepy crickets tune their lullaby,

To soothe his soul to sleep.

Yet, all alert,

His mind is far away, until, behold !

Who is this fair one coming o'er the lea ?

Ah, more than all beside, he joys in her !

His heart leaps up to greet her, ere his feet,

Nimble and strong, can lift his outstretched form

And bear him swift to meet her fond embrace.

Fairer than all things else in earth or skies,

In Abel's eyes this beauteous vision seems,

His sweet Hadassah, shining in the sun,

And singing sweetly with a lute-like voice.

Her simple garb hangs loosely round her form,

Woven with early art, from textures soft,

Of nether barks, with here and there a gem

Of rarest beauty sparkling in the light,

(The brightest gem,—herself !) Her graceful form,

Like some fair Nymph or Goddess from the skies,

Her golden curls, in rich profusion free,
Her glowing cheeks, and eyes whose liquid depths
Bespeak a soul most pure and rich with love,
All, all awaken in her Abel's heart
A rapture of delight, that only she
Has power to raise, and well she knows her power,
And hears the echo sweet deep in her soul.
She comes to bring refreshment to her spouse
The best refreshment her own lovely self.
Awhile his thirsty soul wells up in love ;
And sweet discourse, with many a merry laugh,
And snatches of gay songs entrance the hour.
Soon, soon they hope to build their own dear home,
And plant another Paradise on earth.
Their elder brother, with their common aid,
Had built his own, far grander than the first.
With choicest stones of many a varied hue,
And with his busy wife, thrifty and wise,
Had gathered many comforts in its walls.
While all exulted in the progress made,
Rejoicing with each other day by day.

And so the days sped by, in peace and joy.
But one sad fact remained naught could dispel.
The cloud which hovered dark in man's blue skies,
Portentous of the most tremendous ill,
And growing larger, darker, and more dread.
The cloud of sin oft hid the face of heaven,
But brought no blessings to the thirsty earth.
It scattered ashes and volcanic fires,
Forth issuing from the awful pit of hell.

Dark jealousy had fixed her poisonous root
Deep in the heart of Cain, and, day by day,
Nourished and fed, to rank resentment grew.
His younger brother's joy bred discontent
With his own harder lot.

“ Why should he toil
And sweat beneath the curse, while Abel lay,
In slumberous sloth, in shady nook and glen,
Piping soft strains of love and happiness ? ”

So ran his thoughts, and, toiling in the field
At stubborn roots, or weeds, or heavy stones,
He viewed his brother's ease with angry eyes,
And heard, what seemed to him, his idle songs
With deep contempt, nor failed to speak his tho'ts.

So, more than all, the first born son of man,
When days of childish innocence were past,
Gave deep concern to those who gave him life
And watched with loving care his helpless hours:
For wayward, selfish, and perverse he seemed,
With pride inflated, rife with passions quick,
O'ertopping all restraint, with full conceit
In knowledge of his own, scorning to hear
The words of wisdom and of love divine.

His arrogance still grew with manhood's year
And of his virtues vain, he felt no need
To seek forgiveness through atoning blood.
A tiller of the soil, he proudly brought
Its fruits as proper offering to the Lord :—
But gained no sign of favor from above.

His humble brother, Abel, brought a lamb,
A sacrificial offering, owning sin,
With faith in God and his appointed means.
This God accepted, and received well pleased.

'Twas placed upon an altar, rudely built,
And full in view of Eden's open gate,
With humble prayer that God would own the gift,
When, lo, upon the bleeding sacrifice,
They saw, descending, holy fire from God.
The heart of Abel throbbed with deep delight
To see this glorious token, and to know
His gift accepted, and himself approved.

But why this painful rite, this dying lamb ?
How deemed this gentle, tender hearted soul
A bloody offering grateful to his God ?
'Twas prompted, as accepted, by the Lord.
It taught the same great truths presented now.
Consistent all the teachings of God's word,
From date as ancient as the fall of man
To that dread hour when Christ, on Calvary
The bleeding "Lamb of God," purged all our sins
How plain the solemn truth, that only blood
Can bring remission for the sins of man.

Well Abel knew the penalty of sin,
And also knew the promise of God's truth.
With humble penitence and filial trust,
Claiming no right or merit of his own,
He came, expectant of his God's free grace,
And found, with joy, the blessing he had sought.

Oh blest is he,—his happy fortune sure,—
Who prizes heaven above the joys of earth,
And seeking with his soul its honors high,
Its recognizing smile at last obtains.
No sacrifice too dear, no cost too great
To win the favor of Almighty God,
Whose “*favor life*,” whose “*love is more than life*.”

He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. John III. 36.

Book IV

NEVERTHELESS

DEATH REIGNT

PROEM.

Before thy throne we bow,
O God with reverence profound,
While all thy glorious hosts make heaven resound
With, "Holy, Holy, Holy Thou."

Oh grant that we may see
Such glimpses of thy glorious grace,
That, though a-while forbid to view thy face,
We still may daily grow like thee.

Oh grant that we may hear
The rapturous anthem swelling high,
And echoing through the arches of the sky,
That we may also joy and fear.

And show us by thy word
How thou dost hate each taint of sin,
That we, by purging all our souls within,
May do thy will, O Lord.

Thus witnessing to men,
May we thy purposes unfold,
And teach them rightly, surely to behold
Things far beyond all sinful ken.

And while we hold to view
Sin's awful mystery and doom,
O may thy grace the darkness all illume,
And show thyself still good and true.

BOOK FOURTH.

Sad is the work of one whose pen records
The errors of his kindred and his race,
And, faithful to his Lord, must also speak
The dreadful doom that clings to every sin
Unwept, unexpiated, unforgiven.
Yet faithful most is he e'en to his race,
Who faithful to his Lord, denounces sin,
And sounds uncasing notes of warning loud.

Then let us trace the sad and downward course
Of human life in unbelief and sin.

We saw how Abel stood approved of God,
But Cain despised a bloody sacrifice
As most unworthy of a loving God,
And needless to atone for human guilt
Strong in his own conceit of innocence
He offered only tributes of respect,
Which, owning God as sovereign, and the source
Of every good, confessed no taint of sin.

But ah how soon his sin stood all exposed !
Beholding all his offerings scorned of heaven,
His fury rose ! his angry countenance fell !
Yet even then his long enduring Lord,
With condescending gentleness and grace,
Restrained his wrath and reasoned thus with Cain.

"Why art thou wroth? and why thy countenance
down?

Had'st thou done well, thou should'st accepted be.
If otherwise, 'Sin lieth at the door!'"

But unrepentant Cain withdraws his feet
From God's paternal presence, hot with wrath
Against his younger brother, thus preferred,
God's favorite in worship and in work.

Espying Abel in his solitude,
Calmly reposing with his well-fed flocks,
Just on the margin of his own tilled fields,
He hails him harshly with a stern rebuke.

Poor Abel, wondering at his brother's wrath,
Gently reproves him for his grievous sin,
But he who would not listen to his God
Will brook no preaching from his rival now.
A heavy jagged stick is in his hand
And fury in his heart, inflamed of hell.
(For watchful Satan has not missed his chance,
And he who serves not God is Satan's slave.)
So lifting quick his hand, with furious force
He smites his brother's forehead!

Dreadful sight!

The blood and brains gush from the broken skull!
With one convulsive groan, clasping his hands
In dying agony, the brother falls,
And in a few brief seconds breathes his last.

With sudden horror Cain regards his work,

The first who sees the dreadful doom of sin,
“ The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” —
And wrought by his own hand ! It first befalls
The one most innocent, most loved of heaven.
Then if the one belov’d of heaven must die,
What fate awaits perverse rebellious souls ?
A moment Cain beholds the dreadful sight,
Then turns and flees, pursued by his own thoughts.
Starting at every sound with guilty fear.
Ah dreadful thoughts, when conscience, now awake,
Lashes the spirit with its scorpion stings.
Yet pride and wrath are not yet dead in Cain.
Rebellious still, he fain would hide his guilt,
Nor yet confess, nor yet forsake his sin.

God’s dreadful voice sounds forth,
“ What hast thou done ?

Where is thy brother Abel, now, O Cain ? ”

“ Am I my brother’s keeper ? ” Cain replies
“ I know not where.”

 Ah vain the empty hope
To hide the guilt of murder from the eyes
Of him who searches e’en the hearts of men.

“ O wretched Cain ! the voice cries, from the ground
Of Abel’s blood ! thy murdered brother’s blood !
And now accursed art thou e’en from the earth,
Already cursed from heaven ! The open mouth
Of earth, which drank the blood, cries out aloud
For vengeance dire on the remorseless hand

Which did the awful deed. She shall not yield
henceforth,

To thy strong hand her strength, nor furnish home
Secure and happy for thy eurs'd head.

A fugitive, and wretched vagabond !

A few years longer thou may'st linger here.

Thy very name despised henceforth on earth ! ”

Appalled and stupefied, the wretched man
Thus hears his doom.

But does he now relent ?

Most humbly does he sue for pardoning grace
With agonizing penitence and shame ?

Alas ! Alas ! his heart, rebellious still,
Still hard and proud, complains of undue wrath
As if God's justice were indeed unjust.

“ My punishment is far too great to bear.
Thou hast O God decreed my banishment
From thee, and home, and from my fellow-men.
Cast out of God and man, bereft of hope,
A fugitive in all this wretched world,
Despised by all, in all the coming years,
Cast from thy sheltering care I soon must die
By teeth of beast or hand of angry man.”

And art thou still, O Cain, so loath to die ?
What hope or blessing now has life for thee ?
Since misery, guilt and shame must be thy lot
Why drag thy dreadful load to weary age ?
O guilty conscience ! tis thine awful power

That makes him start and shrink at thought of death.

O death, last enemy, how dreadful thou
To those who die unreconciled to God !
O shuddering horror ! grinning skeleton !
Thy sightless sockets fright the sinful soul !
With fear we fly thy terrible embrace,
E'en offering relief from earthly woe.

But when God sends to call his children home,
A smiling messenger of light appears,
Enrobed in righteousness, well shod with peace,
Begirt with comfort, crowned with hope and joy,
And breathing love, the very breath of heaven.
The final struggle with the enemy
May oft be sharp and full of grief and pain,
But victory is near and sure to all
Who love their King and on his truth rely.
O glorious victory ! O triumph sweet !
When lo the King himself appears revealed
To welcome home with loving smiles his own.

Yet dreadful still, e'en with thy sting removed,
Thou progeny and punishment of sin,
Who fillest happy homes with grief and gloom.
How awful art thou, Death ! most awful too
When least expected, bringing no relief
From grievous sickness or from weary age;
But breaking in upon a happy life,
And stunning loving hearts with speechless woe.

At noon-tide high, Hadassah seeks her spouse,
With happy footsteps tripping o'er the fields ;
But Oh what sorrow waits her gentle heart !
No musical response repeats her song,
But only empty echo answers back.

The sheep ! why stand they at the noontide hour ?
And why so scattered, wildered, and distressed ?
And why with piteous bleatings do they run
To meet her trembling steps ? Alas what ill
Do these strange signs portend ? What coming woe ?

She hastens on with agitated heart.
But Oh her Abel ! There he lies, outstretched
In gory death ! with staring stony eyes !

“ O Abel ! speak ! ” she cries, “ what dreadful fall
Has hurt thee ? why so stark and still ? Oh speak !
Dost thou not hear thine own Hadassah’s voice ? ”
She stoops to touch him. Horror fills her soul !
Keen anguish ! wild dismay ! Then all is lost !
And blackness of deep darkness blots out all !

But later in the day she wakes again.

“ Was it a horrid dream ? Then why wake here ?
And why this dreadful aching at my heart ? ”
Why stand the sheep around her, gazing sad
Upon her prostrate form ?

Ah, now she knows
The dreadful truth ! My Abel is no more !
And I ! Oh why must I now linger here
Dissevered from my love ? Why must my heart

Be rent from out my life ? why must my sun
Be blotted from my skies?"

Alas! Alas!

She scarcely dares to turn her shrinking eyes
Where Abel lies, so dreadful, white, and cold,
Covered with clotted gore and oozing brains.
Yet tenderly, oh tenderly, she lifts
The strengthless hand, and feels the pulseless heart.
Oh hand so gentle ! Oh dear heart so true !
Then with a wail of agonizing grief,
She sinks again unconscious on his breast.

But what of Cain ? does he not suffer too ?
Ah! blighted still more utterly his life !
Dissevered from his Lord by his own hand
And by his stubborn will, his sun of hope
Is blotted out ; and, desolate indeed,
His spirit wanders forth forevermore !

Unhappy child of wrath ! thy wrath indulged
Becomes thy master, and thy portion too !
O wretched Cain ! sent from God's presence, marked
With an eternal brand of infamy.
Thou living monument of righteous wrath
So justly due thy sin, the greatest sin
Against the greatest law, the law of love !
How blest are they, who in their foreheads bear,
Or written in their ialmost hearts of love,
The sacred name of God ! but oh how dread
The mark of Cain, the brand of one disowned
Of God and man, preserved from sudden death
To wear out long on earth thy dreadful doom !

Yet mercy gleams in this, for hopeless woe
Awaits all banished souls in future worlds.

But Cain returns to his devoted wife.
Will she disown him? will she hate him now?

With anxious gaze she marks his disarray,
His wild, fierce looks, and hesitating steps.
But Cain has careful been to pause and cleanse
His bloody hands and garments, not to fright
The only one whose love he dares to trust.
And so he comes, and gently as he may,
He breaks the dreadful news.

Her fond heart sinks

With grief sincere she mourns her brother's loss.
And trembles for her husband even more.
She dreads lest God's fierce wrath should smite him
dead.

But Cain lifts up his shaggy locks, and shows
The startling mark of sevenfold vengeance pledged
'Gainst all who dare, unwarranted of heaven,
To interrupt or execute God's wrath.
Not fully does he own his dreadful crime,
More ready to extenuate his guilt,
Speaking of undue harshness towards himself,
And undue favor towards God's chosen one:
But shows that they must now God's presence flee.
And seek some refuge from his righteous wrath.

Ah blest the soul whose refuge is in God!
Who from him flies, what refuge can he find?

Poor Esah hears it all with deep dismay,
Scarce daring e'en to lift her heart towards God.
Poor woman ! art thou also doomed to bear
Thy husband's sin, and suffer banishment
From home and friends, perhaps from God at last ?

Ah strong and dangerous too the bonds of love
That hinder souls from finding God and heaven !

Come then, Hadassah, view a deeper woe
Than even thine, and hush thy sad complaint.
Thy sun, though hidden for a winter's night,
Shall shine serene again ; thy sorrowing heart,
Though sundered from its earthly love awhile,
More strongly drawn towards heaven, shall there
renew

Those bonds so sweet and dear thou now dost mourn.
But sad the lot of one whose love is spared
A few short years to sink in endless woe,
And whose distinction 'tis while lingering here,
To found a race apostatized from God !

The sad news travels. How, we have not heard,
For who can tell how bad news flies apace ?
And Adam and his mourning family bend,
With anguish and amazment, o'er the forms
Of murdered Abel and his fainting spouse.
Their souls are stupefied and dazed with fear.
Their grief, too deep for words, lies like a weight
Upon their hearts. They know not what to do
Nor where to turn ; with horror paralyzed,
They can but groan unutterable grief.

The sheep are scattered, save the boldest few,
Who timidly approach to see the end.
O smitten shepherd, and O scattered flock !
Unconsciously ye picture forth a scene
Far more momentous in the book of time,
When lo ! the smitten Shepherd, God's dear Son !
The scattered sheep, his chosen faithful ones !

At length Hadassah feebly lifts her head,
And with a moaning grief too deep for tears,
Entreats them to call back his precious soul.
Alas ! how fruitless human efforts prove
To break the seal where death has claimed his own !

Then, "Oh," she cries "is this the dread result
Of sacrifice accepted by his God ?
Is this the frnit of piety and truth ?
Is this the issue of a holy life ?
Does God reward true service thus with death ?"

But Adam grieving e'en with deeper grief,
Since hers was yet devoid of guilt'y pangs,
Exclaims,

"Nay ! Nay ! My child ! reproach not God !
His ways are just and wise. 'Tis we who sin
And charge him foolishly. But could we see
With eyes far reaching to the end of time,
As God beholds it all, we sure would own
His judgments good and merciful, as just.
Alas, my child, we now behold the doom,
Fulfilled at last, of our first grievous sin !
How dreadful ! Oh how awful now it seems !

“And yet how patient my long-suffering Lord.
The stroke how long delayed ! and even now
What mercy softens e'en this dreadful blow !
We know the dear one lives. It is not true
That God doth thus reward true piety:
We know the love divine that shed its light
O'er Abel's holy life. We saw the joy
That filled his soul when God received his gift
And though we cannot fully understand
The sacred rite, it surely tells of good
To sinful dying man, and that, through death,
We still may find the way, once more, to life.”

“But where is Cain ? doth he not also grieve?”

“Alas ! Alas ! my children, 'tis this thought
That rends my spirit with the sharpest grief.
Oh where is Cain ?

 Oh would I knew as well
His sins forgiven, his soul prepared for heaven,
As now I know that Abel dwells with God.
‘Oh where is Abel ?’ grieves me not to ask !
But where is Cain ? It matters little where
In all the earth, (though now a fugitive)
But, banished from his God, where roams his heart ?
And where shall dwell his restless soul at last ?
Ah me ! His bitter spirit grieved me oft :
And now I fear, with proofs I cannot shun,
And—O my soul—with grief too keen to bear,
That Cain's own hand hath done this dreadful deed !”

* * * *

But why pursue this tale of grief and woe
Thus early sprung from selfishness and sin ?
May we the lesson learn, the sin to shun,
And find in God, our Saviour, healing balm
For woe, and full salvation for our souls
O'er death, and victory at last o'er sin.

But how doth Heaven regard this heinous crime ?
Not ignorant was Heaven of earthly news.
No need of telegraph, or human art.
“Before they were brought forth” God's word de-
clared

The strange events of time, and wondering hearts
Received and pondered each mysterious fact,
And questioned how would end the devious course
Of fallen man, still wandering far from God.

How could it end, save in abyss of woe ?
Could Arctic voy'gers leave the sunny realms
Of life-sustaining-heat, and vainly seek
To win the barren pole, where earth revolves
In emptiness and gloom, and hope to find
Some other spring of life ? or hope to shun
(Except by prompt return) the sure approach
Of death, enfolding in his icy arms
Of dreadful cold, the bravest, stoutest hearts ?
As surely vain the hope of every soul
That wanders from its God in ways of sin.

But how correct the wrong ? How save the race ?
How stop at least the vast increase of souls
Just born to blossom for eternal death ?

No need has God Omniscient to consult
His angels what to do, or from their votes
To gather wisdom for his guidance now.
But He, the great Triune who counsel held,
And said “Let us,” “in our own image” now
Make man, no doubt agreed in counsel wise
First to redeem, and then to new-create,
And save at last the chosen sons of God.

Yet, angels, unforbid, “desire to look”
Deep in the awful myst’ry of God’s plans,
And many a counsel held with wondering hearts
Concerning things to come yet unrevealed.

Thus, looking from the battlements of heaven
Upon the dreadful drama, whose first scenes
Were now unrolled to view, a thoughtful group
Conversed, one day, of such strange mysteries.

“Oh why, my comrades dear, does God permit
This awful tragedy of sin and woe?”
Thus spoke La-Mah, youngest of angels fair.

Him Ariel answered

“Should the Lord destroy?
With sudden vengeance sweep the race away,
And blast, with everlasting death, the work,
So well begun, though now so greatly marred?
Ah! then might Satan triumph, and proclaim
The Lord’s defeat, to all the hosts of hell.
No, we are confident, though now so dark
Seems all the outlook, God will surely bring

More glorious wonders of his truth and grace,
E'en from the folly, seeming now to reign;
And precious fruits of love, and praise, and joy.
Shall then abound in pure and happy hearts."

The other, pressing still his question deep,
" But would not greater sin and deeper woe
To still increasing multitudes be spared ?
Surely the Lord of love takes no delight
In suffering or in sin, nor plants a tree
That must bear evil fruit forevermore.
If planted otherwise, why not arrest
Its hideous growth, and cut it to the ground ? "

Again said Ariel,

" God is great and wise,
And from the evil able to bring good.
He cuts not down the tree till all its worth
Is fully proved, and all its good is gleaned.
What if a multitude of germs decay
And come to naught, or half-ripe fruit fall off,
Or even fully ripe be spoiled with worms,
Will he not spare the tree if some good fruit,
A fair proportion still, be found therein ? "

La-Mah replied,

" But Human souls, endowed
With faculties divine, are more than fruit,
And, though defaced with sins, have virtues fair,
And seem too precious lightly to destroy."

Then Ariel answered,

“ Theirs the fatal choice;
And sons of men, who might be heirs of God,
But live no life divine, nor chiefly choose
The life eternal, and the love of God,
But choose the life of creatures born to die,
Though seeming fair as sunset in their lives,
Shall fade as soon, unvalued more in heaven.
The very brutes have lovely traits, but lo,
What countless hordes in coming years must die,
With neither hope nor promise sweet of heaven,—
Unpitied too,—to serve the need of man.
Could God not raise up children from the stones?
Or could he not evolve them from the beasts?
Is man who loves not God, of greater worth
Than brutes who love not, since they know him not?
The soul of man most precious is indeed
If now, or yet to be, a son of God,
And Oh how precious, angels could not tell.
The soul new-born a son and heir of God,
And growing in his likeness day by day,
Is precious as the “apple of his eye.”
All others are as chaff before the wind,
Lifeless and worthless, only fit for fire.”

La-Mah now urged his question once again,

“ But cannot God fore-see the ruin dire
Of those who finally reject his grace?
Is’t needful then to bring them into life
Merely as heirs of everlasting death?

The animals that die in countless hordes
Here end their being. What of human woe?"'

" Ah brother" answered Ariel, " Why forbid
Probation, or e'en life, save to the souls
To bliss and goodness fore-ordained ? But pause
Behold the facts ! why theorize in vain ?
Enough for us to view the present truth,
And learn God's purpose from his spoken word.
'Tis hard to think how future worlds can be
Where souls may dwell devoid of love to God,
And dragging on, from age to weary age,
A life of conscious mis'ry and despair.
But will this differ from the present fact ?
Behold the wretched hosts of Satan now !
How lost to God and hope ! Did God create
The sin that made them so ? Did God delight
In all their wickedness, in all their woe ?
How sprang they into life ? God made them good,
But free to choose the bad (their dreadful choice)
Their choice and portion now, and ever more !
Shall we predict this cannot be with man ?
But say not then, dear brother, God hath erred
Or gave men life merely as heirs of death.
Not willing He that any die in sin,
But that they all might turn, repent and live.
Yet still La Mah pursued his painful theme.
" Justicee might now demand eternal death
Of him who first transgressed, and show, to worlds
Yet uncreate, the righteous doom of sin.

But why this host of victims now fore-doomed ?
Why multiply poor wretched souls for woe ?
Why call them into being ? why create
New candidates for Satan's empire dark,
New trophies and new subjects for the foe ? ”

Then Ariel,

“ Seeret things belong to God ;
The whys and wherefores of his righteous work
Or final purposes we know not yet.
Enough that he, supremely wise and good,
'The judge of all the earth' will do the right,
And triumph over wrong : The promised seed
'Shall bruise the serpent's head' and save his own ;
For none can pluck them from his Father's hand.
No victory can Satan ever gain.
Souls added to his empire bring new woe.
And even self-doomed souls may serve some end
In God's great plan, and even by their wrath
Against his cause his righteous word fulfill.
We said “ the chaff is only fit to burn.”
Yet even chaff is useful while it serves
To keep the grain so precious to the Lord.
For useful wheat he spares the useless tares
Until the gathering of the ‘ harvest home.’
The doom is just, ‘ the soul that sins shall die.’
And if 'tis just for one 'tis just for all.
But needless suffering God will not impose
Nor suffer souls to multiply for woe.
But were the whole world doomed to endless woe,—
Attend, dear brother, ponder well this thought,—

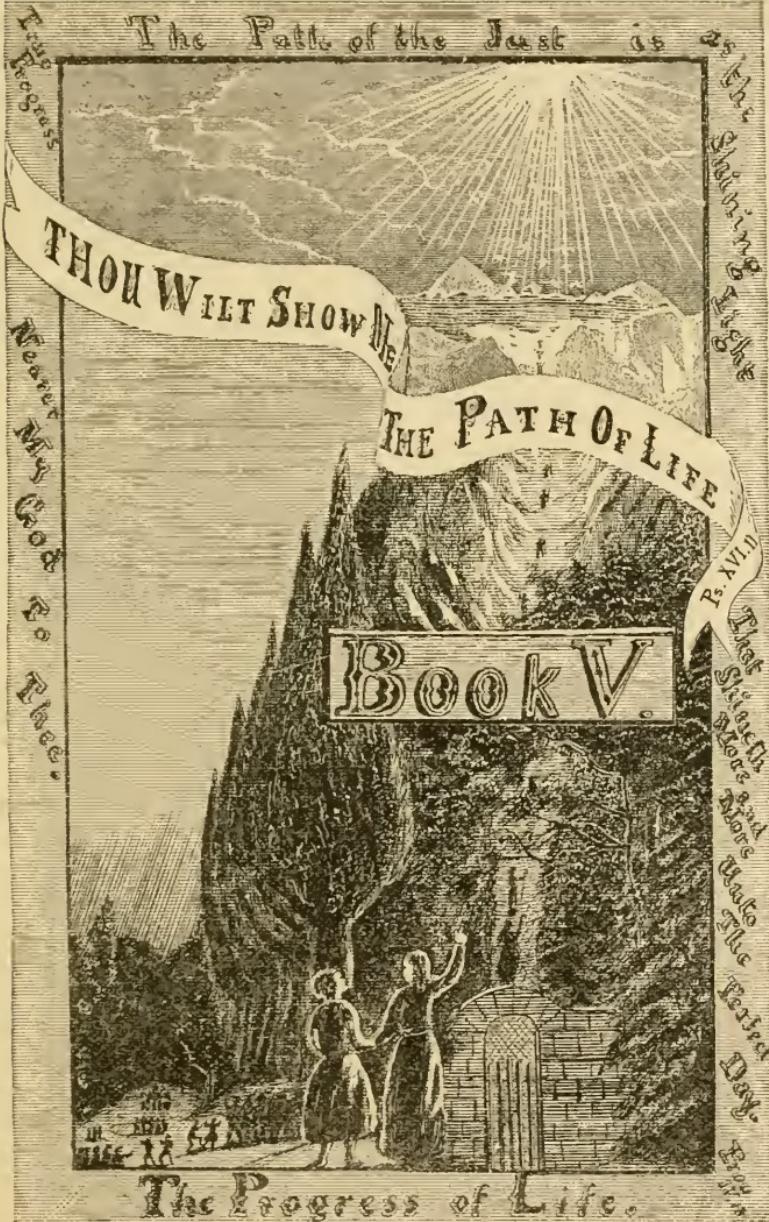
What were her children to the countless hosts
 Of God's vast universe? A single grain
 Counted against a handful from the beach?
 Nay!—counted against the countless sands of earth!
 And what her week (each day a thousand years),
 Compared to all eternity to come?
 Sum up the whole and let the lesson stand
 For all the ages and for all the worlds!
 How useful and how merciful the doom,
 If henceforth and forevermore it saves
 All future worlds from sin, prevents their fall,
 And thus prevents the wreck of countless worlds,
 Made heirs henceforth of God's amazing grace,
 And in the fullness of all coming time
 Gathered at last throughout all heaven in one!"

Once more LaMah a final question asked:

"Alas my brother, whence did sin arise?
 How came such evil in the realms of God?"

"Ah now" said Ariel, thou dost ask what none
 But God can answer yet. We only know
 It now exists; and those who evil choose,
 Cut loose from God, bring evil on their souls
 Forbid all title to eternal life,
 (Since life, true life, is only found in God)
 And find their portion in eternal death."

The wages of sin is death. Rom. VI. 23.



PROEM.

Peace be to those who trust the Lord
And all his words obey.
Obedience brings its own reward
To children of the day.

Thy words, O Lord, are true and right,
May all their virtue know,
And learn the joys and deep delight
That from thy precepts flow.

Thy bounty grants our daily food,
Thy care preserves from harm,
Thou shieldest all the true and good,
With thy protecting arm.

But richer, dearer gifts are given
Than food or earthy pelf,
To those who seek thy grace from heaven,
And love thee for thyself.

The very ills that now annoy,
Oft filling us with woe,
At last shall bring us greater joy,
And thy great goodness show.

No needful good wilt thou deny
To those who seek thine aid.
The men who on thy truth rely
Shall never be betrayed.

Goodness and mercy follow those
Who follow grace and peace,
And those who in thy truth repose
Shall find thy grace increase.

O may thine arms our souls embrace
With everlasting love,
Sustain us through our earthly race
And welcome us above.

BOOK FIFTH.

With musings solitary, yet not sad,
We sit and gaze upon the far off worlds
That through the sable veil of widowed night,
Gaze back with gentle eyes, upon our own.
What wonders they might tell of power divine,
And wisdom “ infinite, unsearchable,
And past our finding out,” and goodness too,
Which blest eternity may yet unfold.
We long to visit those mysterious heights,
To view the customs strange of other worlds,
And converse hold with their inhabitants.
This now denied, we yet may gather much
Of knowledge, by the aid of human art,
Most pleasant and most profitable too,
To lift the thoughts above this narrow earth,
T’ enlarge the mind and purify the heart.

But while we sojourn here, this present world
Demands our service and our study too,
With treasured lore of ages of the past.
The present hour lays momentary claim
To thought and action, while the future stands
Awaiting our approach to grasp our souls
Prepared or unprepared, to lead us on,
With gentle power no mortal may resist.
But still ’tis true the past demands our thought,
And from her stores, true wisdom may be won

To serve our present needs, and so to guide
Our souls in safety o'er time's future seas.
To cross indeed the waste of buried years,
Swept by oblivion's tides of ages past,
Exceeds our power. As well attempt to scale
Yon heavenly heights, and visit other worlds.

Yet still unsatisfied to gather up
The scattered fragments of the wrecks of time,
The silent records of antiquity,
We long to view the men who lived and breathed
In years gone by, as we are living now.

And as we sit and muse, our drowsy soul,
Insensibly released from every bond,
That bound us to the present place or time,
Forsaking all things seen by fleshly eyes,
Beholds, without amazement, scenes unrolled
Of ages past, it most desired to see.

Was it some magic that o'erpowered the sense ?
And gave to unreal things reality,
In our own eyes alone ?

Unconscious borne,

Through the dim portals of the realm of dreams,
And, marking no transition from the things
Of sense, to things of fancy, pass we hence
From living scenes, that soon shall seem to us
Like fleeting visions gone, to re-enact
(As real to us) things once realities,
Now numbered with the visions of the past !
Sweet nature's magic ! how it charms the sense !

How wonderful its power! Oft to delude,
Yet sometimes too, to warn, instruct, and bless.

Above the turmoil of the crowded street,
Where flow contending tides of human life,
Where pleasure, wealth, and fashion vie, with toil
And busy care, to reach their various ends,
Where splendor rolls in equipage of gold,
Near prison vans, and jostling vehicles
Go rumbling o'er the pave, with ponderous loads
Of earthly goods, on which fair hopes are fixed,
Or freighted full with precious human forms,—
Above the busy *now*, whose slender point,
Suspends the issues of two worlds, the while,
So beautiful she seems, admiring crowds
View only her, nor note the balances
In which she weighs them all with all their deeds,
Committing to that future, (which shall soon
Be their eternal now), their record strange;
Above all present struggles, hopes, and fears,
Our course to that past era, strange, ascends,
When human life was at its highest flood,
Before that dreadful, swift decay began,
Which called for floods to cleanse a guilty world.

With joy we view the golden age of man,
When human life its full development
Has reached in this millennium of peace,
With which all life began. Now man has time
To live, and time to grow, and time to think,
Unterrified by death, or war's alarms.

Now life is not too short, nor art too long
To meet this generation's utmost needs,
An age devoted to the fear of God,
The true and living God, our gracious God,
Our loving father, who delights to bless
His creatures when they scorn him not away.

'Tis not an era rife with great events,
For sin and crime have small development,
And Satan's power among the sons of God
Is hardly known ; and e'en the race of Cain,
Departing not in form from serving God,
Lived like the men of modern christendom,
Who own the living God and Christ, although
They love and serve the idols of their hearts.

'Tis ours to mark the progress of our race,
When seven long centuries have rolled away.

Behold the city where our fathers dwell,
The holy city of the Sons of God,
(Of Adam born "which was the son of God.")
O city fair, what happy homes are thine,
Where peace and love and beauty reign supreme.

Yet strange it seems, to curious modern eyes :—
Where are its domes and steeples ? where its towers ?
Its theatres, its prisons and its courts,
Its palaces, and crowded tenements ?
Its low resorts, the nests of vice and crime ?
Its factories with dense ascending smoke ?
The roar and rumble of its business life ?

O happy city ! needing none of these,
Thou sit'st enthroned in loveliness unmariared.

No bare high walls that bar sweet nature out,
And shut in care and misery and toil,
Nor stony, filthy streets, nor odors foul
Offend our raptured senses, while we walk
With pure delight, through avenues so broad,
That those who laid them must have deemed the
world

Full large enough to furnish all her sons
The room to live, and breathe and move in joy.

And lo,—the happy people that we meet!
With smiles they greet us, full of all good-will,
And salutations, eraving peace from heaven.
Nor seem they driven with urgent work or care,
Nor yet to loiter idly on in sloth.
Kind nature gives them time as well as room.
Most venerable men we meet, whose years,
By centuries counted, yet no burden lay
Upon their forms, erect, and hale, and strong.
And happy children, blooming bright with health,
As frolicsome as lambs, sport unrebuked;
For why should etiquette or stern restraint
Impair their freedom where no crime is feared ?

We tread not first the thoroughfares of trade ;—
Environed here by happy homes remote
From toil, all things invite repose.
No grandeur greets the eye. No stately piles

Ambitious to outshine the humbler homes,
Excite to envy, arrogance or pride.
Nor does stern poverty distress the sight ;
But competence and beauty smile from all.
Here art and nature, Genii of the place,
Wedded most happily, together dwell,
And new born pleasures, innocent and sweet
Arise to praise and bless the union dear.

The birth of art was at the birth of man,
Her earliest office, nature to adorn :
Man's first commission, dressing Eden's bowers :
If "nature unadorned, adorned the most,"
Those bowers had been more beautiful undressed ;
The proverb (true when art divine preserves
Its perfect work) wild nature proves untrue
When artless left, she pushes blindly forth,
Even when sin has brought no taint nor curse,
Still more since thorns and thistles were decreed
To mar her beauty. Now true art restores
The grace of nature, and bestows new charms.

Behold the scene ! we scarcely know if yet
We view not here fair Paradise rebuilt,
With added joys of human brotherhood,
With interests, hopes, and pleasures reaching out
Wide o'er the world, the present, future, past.
Along the avenue, fair, stately trees,
With cool embowering shades, arise from lawns
Of freshest verdure, or from one great lawn
Unmarred by walls or fences (barriers built

In later days by sin), but fair to see
Around each home were massy beds of flowers,
Whose varied hues of crimson, blue, and gold,
Amid the green of shrubbery and lawn,
With pleasing contrasts charm our happy eyes.

The dwellings, built in various styles of art,
Of substance to endure while centuries roll,
Though seldom rising into storied height,
Are broad and ample, full of light and cheer.
No cold blank walls repel the friendly eye,
As oriental jealousy must build,
In after years when sin doth rule the world,
But cheerful windows welcome heaven's sweet light,
And ope rare glimpses both of earth and heaven.
And o'er the walls and porticos, fair vines
And gleaming roses spread their charms, more dear
Than sculptured art or architectural dreams.

Awhile we wander through the business streets,
But even here we miss the noisy jar
Of modern cities, full of toil and strife.
The heavy loads are borne on backs of beasts
Of elephantine strength, and velvet tread.
The merchandise is good and various too,
And even rich, for precious stones and gold
Abound, and gems of curious workmanship,
The fruit of ingenuity and skill,
And fabrics fair in various colors dyed.
On every hand these tempt the buyer's purse,
As well as things most needful for the home,—

The fruits and grains, fair products of a soil
Of virgin richness, also implements
Of industry, utensils cast, or forged,
For work, in home, or field, or on the sea.

Yet business rules not all this city's thoughts,
Nor drives its citizens, with headlong haste,
From morn to eve, far into weary night.
Nor do the palaces of pleasure draw
The thoughtless throngs to speed the fleeting hours,
Nor gilded dens of vice allure the young
To enter on the road that leads to death.
In patriarchal homes, whose gentle laws
Restrain the wayward, and protect the weak,
Sweet pleasure makes her home, where joy, and
peace
And knowledge dwell, with all affections pure.

What interest, then, doth chiefly centre here ?
It is not commerce, manufactures, art,
Nor halls of learning, wheels of government,
Nor palaces of royal pomp and pride.

Come let us seek to find the ruling thought.
The avenues a common centre seek,—
A noble park well filled with stately trees,
But full of mystery that none may solve.
Its hedge, thickset and tall, forbids the gaze
Of curious eyes, forbids each human foot :
Yea, unbridged streams forbid too near approach.

At length we stand before its open gate,
And look across the separating gulf.

But lo! two guards arrest our startled sight,
Standing in shining garb, with flashing swords,
With supernatural splendor in their looks.
At this strange sight, each hope of entrance dies ;—
Yet all the more our longing souls desire
To penetrate the mystery within.

A crowd of youth, and venerable men,
With reverent, earnest gaze, stand looking in,
And oft in adoration, humbly bow
With prayer and praise.

We join the lowly group,
And seek the secret mystery to solve.

“ What is yon park, so carefully shut up ?
'Twas surely not to tantalize the heart,
That here, where all seems innocence and peace,
In this fair city, full of pure delight,
This spot was made the loveliest of all,
With every tree most pleasant to the eye,
And fruits whose richness charms the trancéd sight,
And then walled in with stern forbidding thorns !
Who planted this fair garden ? who reserves
Its choicest pleasures from the general use ? ”

To this a reverend man, with pleasant smile,
Said,

“ Stranger, knowest thou not fair Eden's bowers ?
This is the ancient Paradise, where God
Held intercourse most intimate with man ;
But man rebelled ; was driven forth ; and now
All entrance is denied : yet still, the Lord

By many tokens shows his presence here.
No more may man revisit Paradise,
Or plant another Eden here on earth;
For sin is here, yea in our very heart,
Yet still the Lord doth love the sacred place,
And those who love Him, oft His glory see,
And feel his blissful presence in their souls.
Blest are the men, who ‘daily at his gates’
‘Stand watching at the posts of these his doors.’”

“Then do not all,” we cry, “delight to wait,
Here at the gates of Paradise, to see
The glory of their Lord? methinks if this
Were my high privilege, I scarce could spend
A single day, without the glorious sight !”

“So all would think,” replies the sage, “and so
It is, with those in whom the love of God
Dwells richly, and abounds, for love is more
Than all the joys of sight, and yet with most,
The joys and cares of earth appear so great
They scarce find time to dwell before God’s throne.”

“Happy the man,” say we, “whose house doth front
These holy gates, and who doth ever dwell
Within the light of God’s blest countenance.”

“That house is Adam’s, father of our race.
For seven long centuries he there has dwelt,
With gentle mother Eve, and now to-night
His sons and daughters gather in their house,
To celebrate their anniversary day.”

“Stranger, art thou among the sons of God?
If so I bid thee weleome to the feast.”

The language quaint, we understand, as one
Who dreams. With feelings far too deep for words
Accept the invitation, and await,
With deepest interest, the appointed time.
But list! What music steals upon the ear?

* * * * *

The quiet evening comes, the gentle hour,
Sweetest of all her sisters, dark or bright,
That crown the day with splendor and with power,
Or weave the mystic charms of slumbrous night.

O holy hour! from earthly cares and charms
Alluring oft, with meditative grace,
Thou stretchest out thy tender pleading arms
To woo us heavenward in thy warm embrace.

The ruddy Morn dispels our soft repose,
And summons loud, to labor, oft to strife,
And when the sun with mid-day fervor glows
The busy hours with earthly cares are rife.

When, through oblivion, rest our strength redeems,
Or while our sleeping reason leaves the helm,
And thought drifts widely o'er the sea of dreams.
Wierd Midnight rules a dread and barren realm.

But Eve, dear Eve, thou rul'st a realm of love,
The border land, where earth and heaven do blend,
While earthly home, and you dear home above
Their influence sweet, to charm our spirits, lend.

We watch the splendors of receding day,
Her uproar hushed in silence soft and deep,
And lo, e'en now, yon star, with silver ray,
Begins her vigils for the night to keep.

Tired hands lay down the burdens of the day,
And feet and happy fancies homeward turn,
While welcome waits, in eyes and voices gay,
And loving hearts with warm affections burn.

* * * * *

With strange emotions we approach the home
Where our first Father dwells: from far off lands
Of foreign accent, and of customs strange,
And from an era so remote and dim,
That e'en the farthest star would seem more clear,—
A generation of futurity,
Desevered by the lapse of age on age.
We dare not hope he'll own us for a son.
And towards a Sire, so distant, though so near,
We cannot fully feel the filial tie;
And yet with reverential joy we come,
To claim the notice of a man so great,
The representative of all our race,
Whom we may boldly for a parent claim:
With curious interest too, to learn the thoughts
Of one acquainted with the fount of life.

But whence this strange new light? as if the dawn
Were blending with the very light of heaven?

'Tis not the moon's, but fairer far than hers,
Though beautiful her mystic light may be,
Uplifting gently, pions hearts towards heaven.
This issues from the gates of Paradise !

It is ! it is ! the glory of the Lord !

* * * * *

From contemplation of this glorious sight,
We turn, at last, to Adam's house once more.

Behold him ! standing on the ample porch,
A stately man, majestic in his mien,
Of massive brow, and flowing silver locks,
And eyes whose lustre, yet undimmed by age,
Seems made to pierce the thoughts of other men,—
A king of men, the world's First Patriarch,
A very "Son of God," a mighty man,
And "little lower than the angels" made,
"With glory crowned" and "honor" from his God.
Set o'er the works of God's own hands he rules
His empire, heir apparent of his Lord.
And yet no haughtiness or harshness marks
His countenance benign, but peace and love
Reign in his heart, and through him rule the world.
Each humblest subject his own son he claims,
And honors with a father's tenderness.
A happy smile o'er all his features plays,
As on the fields there fall, through summer clouds,
Sweet gleams of light, and yet the meekness there,
And pensiveness, that oft enshade his face,
Are traces clear of former shame and grief.

Beside him stands our queenly mother Eve,

Still lovely in her age ! How beautiful,
Supremely beautiful, when first she rose
On Adam's ravished sight, in Paradise !
The morning star that filled his world with light !

With matron dignity, and queenly grace ;
She now presides o'er Adam's heart and home,
And with a mother's tenderness and love,
Receives her guests as children, near and dear

And so her children come, with filial love,
And happy confidence, and freedom too,
And yet with deep respect, and reverence.

A goodly company of noble men,
Nature's true noblemen, assembled now,
With maids and matrons, whose rare loveliness
Betokens kinship intimate with Heaven.

The marble, at the magic touch of art,
Inspired by genius, starts up into forms
Of rarest beauty, and ideal grace.

And so the canvass seems to glow and blush,
In richest colors, from the painter's hand.
But chiseled forms and features vie in vain,
In vain the painter's glowing colors vie
With all the living loveliness and grace
Of Eve's fair daughters, near the dawn of time,
Fresh from the hand of nature, and of God !
The glow of perfect health upon the cheek,
The inimitable bloom of lasting youth,
Blent with the noble grace of womanhood,

Faces lit up with aspirations true,
Unmarred by petty passion, grief, or sin,
The tender light illumining the eye,
Of hope, and pleasure, and of precious love,
Shining on all (and shining unabashed,
For all are worthy—brothers, sisters, here),
The flowing richness of the glossy hair,
The rounded contour of the graceful form,
The play of sweet expression more than all,
Through which the soul's own beauty flashes forth,
And mystic charm of manners' witching grace,
All, all entrance our soul, with wondrous joy ;
The while we think, “ if man is ‘ little less
Than angel,’ in his strength and dignity,
Woman may well compare in beauty’s charm.
The company, assembled on the lawn,
After their loving greetings first are o'er,
And mirth and music pleasantly subside,
Turn all their faces to the beauteous gate,
And, bowing low, tune heart and voice to praise.
Adam, the service leads, as well becomes
The father, in his household, king, and priest.

And first of all a sacrificial lamb
Upon the altar yields its sinless life,
Type of that lamb that, sinless, bore our sins,
The very “ Lamb of God,” taking away
“The sins of all the world.” Then rose a hymn
Of adoration and of praise to God.
But hark!

What is this mighty sound that blends

With this sweet hymn? e'en as the swelling tones
Of some vast organ, whose resounding notes
In their deep basso, shake the edifice?

Or as the thunder makes the very soul
To tremble at its power? And yet this sound
Not power alone, but harmony conveys.

'Tis as "the sound of many waters," borne,
In steady current, o'er the cataract's verge,
Or as the mighty roll of storm-tossed seas,
Or as the notes of vast æolian lyres,
Stretching from sky to sky, and breathing out
The breath of every breeze, in praise to God!

Our souls, exultant, rise upon the wings
Of this majestic anthem, upward borne
To loftiest heights, of rapture, joy, and praise.
Though words unknown from other lips may sound,
The harmony, and joy, and praise are one.

We lift our voice, and join the chorus loud,
Singing, and making melody to God.

But whene'er this mighty song? Is it from tongues
Of unseen spirits in the realms of air?

Nay, 'tis from human hearts, and human lips;
For, when its cadences at last, are hushed—
(Only sweet murmurings ling'ring on the ear),
When e'en the echoing hills rejoice no more,
In unison with this great human joy,
We seek the meaning of the psalm sublime,—
The ancient man, whose invitation kind
Had drawn us here, renews his greetings now,
And satisfies our eager questionings.

“This is the city’s evening hymn of praise;
For at this hour the glory of the Lord
Illumes the sky, and sanctifies each home
With radiance, reaching to the very soul,
More sweet and tender than the sacred light
Of holy Sabbath eve, and every heart
That loves the Lord sings from excess of joy,
E’en as the birds, when morning tints the sky,
Tune their soft notes in universal praise.”

At length the brightness fades into the night,
And Adam welcomes all his guests within.
We cannot pause to trace the features rare
Of this fair home; our thoughts are all engaged
With higher themes. This venerable man,
And lovely woman, who have learned so well
The secret of a long and happy life,
Of innocence and youth so well preserved,
And wedded to a wisdom near divine.
May teach us what we most desire to know.
And many facts of nature we may learn
Of which philosophers of modern times
Can only wildly speculate, in vain.

Our friend conducts us to our Father’s seat,
And introduces us with reverent bow.

“Behold a youthful son and stranger here,
Who visits Eden’s city, from some realm
By us unknown, and owns the sacred names
‘A Son of Adam,’ and a ‘Son of God!’”

Well pleased the father stretches forth his hand,
In welcome kind.

“Whence art thou, O my Son?
What is thy name? And from what family sprung?
And (sinee for thee is claimed the title high
A Son of God) I marvel thou art still
A stranger to this city of our God.”

“I come, O father, from a distant land,
Either towards rising or the setting sun,
So far that if I journeyed, day by day,
At swiftest speed of this primeval age,
A year or more had scarcely brought me here.
Vast intervening oceans spread their wastes
Of briny waters, and tumultuous waves,
And depths profound, which teem with monsters
strange,
To separate that fair new world from this.
But strangest yet of all, the sea of time,
Which sweeps to dark oblivion human life,
Rolls up its Lethean waves of ages past
Between thine age and mine.”

With startled eyes,
And deepening interest, eager and intense,
The father now would many questions ask.

“O son, deceive me not. Thy story strange
Incredible, impossible, appears.
But if some messenger from Heaven, disguised,
Thou com’st to speak of things as yet far off,
And, in the future dim, from us concealed,

Oh speak ! for we have much to ask. Oh tell !
How fare the sons of men ? Do they depart
From faithful service of the living God ?
What progress do they make in winning back
The favor (I have forfeited) of God ? ”

“ Progress indeed, O father, they have made,
Most wonderful in science and in art,
But not, alas ! in ways that lead to God !
How shall I tell the story, sad and strange,
O venerated sire, of all thy sons ?
But, even as I speak, an influence strong
Restrains my lips. I am, indeed, not sent
A messenger to thee. I come to learn
And tell to mine own age the things I see.
Oh let me ask of thee, this question great,
What is the secret of the truest life ? ”

“ Plainly, my son, it is in BEING TRUE
TO HIM WHO LIVES the SOURCE OF ALL TRUE LIFE.”

“ Oh teach me, father. I desire to learn
And place myself submissive at thy feet.”

Then he

“ It is most fitting that the sons
Should from experience of their fathers learn ;
Yet it is wise the future to regard :
And our hearts yearn to know its mysteries.”

At this a young and noble man stands forth,—
One of the youngest of the company,—
Though even he his four score years may claim.

His eyes are glistening with prophetic fire,
His countenance beaming with celestial light,
While every eye and ear attention give.

(His age and lineage, whispered low, we learn).

His name is Enoch, and he leads his son,
A stripling of a dozen years or more,
Methuselah by name, and bowing low,
With hand upon the shoulder of the lad
He says

“This boy, O Father, shall behold
The great catastrophe!—the dreadful end,
Of all this living world, save that ‘in wrath
The Lord remembers mercy,’ and declares
‘A remnant shall be saved.’ Let me, O sire,
The ‘seventh from thee,’ inspired from God him-
self,

Foretell the things you so desire to learn.

Let me declare, to all who hear me now
(And unto generations yet to come,
Till time shall be no more), the wrath of God
Against all those who spurn his wondrous love,
And scorning to be children, live his foes.
His foes they die,—as foes forever live
(Forever dying). Since no love could win,
No wrath could drive their souls, from scorn, to love.

A dreadful woe awaits this erring world;
For sin, now born, shall grow and multiply
Till all the world, corrupted, and debased,
And filled with wickedness, and violence,

Polluted, stained with guilt of deepest dye,
(No seas or floods could ever wash away),
Calls down thy retribution, righteous Heaven!"

He pauses,—and a breathless stillness reigns,
Deeper than muteness of the silent stars
(It seems we might e'en hear each other think),
While each explores his anxious heart to find
If sin reigns there, and questions, "Is it I?"

"My Father," he resumes, "'tis not alone
The race of Cain, hath wandered from the Lord,
E'en now some sons of God have joined in heart,
And in unholy wedlock joined their souls
With those who love not God; a carnal love
Hath so out-stripped the love of God and Heaven!
This folly still must grow. So Satan wins
By fair devices.

And 'tis here we see
The small beginnings of the awful end.

"But hear me, Father, still.

God will restore
Once more the ruins of a fallen world.
But soon (alas! how soon!) the cunning foe,
Who claims this earthly empire as his own,
Shall lead the foolish hearts of sinful men
Astray from God, to serve his own vile will.
Then thickest gloom of spiritual night,
And 'darkness deep shall cover all the earth,'
'Gross darkness all the people,' steeped in sin,
In vile and foolish superstitions lost.

• But unto those who in the region sit,
 And shadow deep, of death, shall light arise?
 On souls in hopeless gloom, all sick with sin
 Shall surely rise the ‘Sun of righteousness,’
 ‘With healing in his beams.’ So sorrowing men
 Shall consolation find at last in him
 Whom they had wronged by sin.

Behold, O sire,
 The type and prophecy in these thy sons!
 Their very names bespeak the mystery,
 Array them in their order. ‘Adam’ thou
 The first, ‘Seth,’ ‘Enos,’ ‘Cainan,’ ‘Mah’laleel
 Next ‘Jared,’ ‘Enoch’ and ‘Methuselah.’
 But ‘Lamech’ yet and ‘Noah’ too must come.
 Then may you read in their successive names.

‘MAN’ ‘PLACED’ IN ‘MISERY’ ‘LAMENTABLE’
 The ‘PRAISE OF GOD’ ‘DESCENDS,’ who, ‘CONSE-
 CRATE,’
 The ‘SPOIL OF DEATH,’ ‘TASTES’ ‘CONSOLATION’
 sweet.

The hidden meaning of this prophecy,
 Wove in the very warp of history,
 Will yet be known by those who love the Lord.
 It has a meaning worthy of the Lord.
 To us it is not given to know the whole.
 Some awful horror waits the guilty world,
 Some dark conspiraey of death and hell,
 Against the Lord of life, which men shall join.
 But over all the Lord shall triumph yet,
 Most gloriously shall triumph, and shall ‘crush

The serpent's head, though it shall bruise his heel,'
E'en through this hideous crime, the Lord shall
bring

Forgiveness,—from this sin of deepest dye,
The grace that cleanses man from every sin.

And o'er this worst, most horrible assault
Of hell, God's victory is most complete.

Even 'the wrath of men shall praise the Lord.'

Beyond this, all their 'wrath he shall restrain.'

But wrath remains for those who spurn his love.

The day of wrath, which ends the world, begins!

'Behold the Lord doth come! He cometh with
Ten thousand of his sons! to execute

His judgment upon all, and to convince

Ungodly men of their ungodly deeds,

Which they ungodly did, and speeches hard

Ungodly sinners spoke against the Lord.'

Then will the Lord take all his ransomed home,

And sin, and woe shall vex their souls no more."

He ceases: still his count'nce glows with fire,
His solemn words still weigh on every heart.

A painful silence rests upon us all,

Relieved by long drawn sighs, for though his words
Speak comfort for the souls that love their Lord,

They tell of wrath, and ruin for the race.

Moved by the Holy Ghost the prophet spake,
And they who heard, much of his spirit shared

But 'not unto themselves they ministered

The things they spake,' kept for a later age.

They, like the angels, "still desired to look"
Deep into myst'ries time alone would solve.
They question much concerning who, or what
"The spirit which was in them signified,
Which testified the sufferings of Christ
And glory that should follow" from his death.

As for ourselves, we gazed on Enoch's face,
All radiant with the glory of the Lord,
With thoughts and feelings close akin to awe.
Oft had we read his marv'lous history,
So well condensed in one brief paragraph,
And sometimes more than mortal he had seemed,
Who triumphed o'er mortality itself.
What mortal e'er gained greater victory,
Or better worth perpetual renown?
The world's great warriors triumphed not o'er death,
Nor over sin, nor self, but o'er brute force,
By more brute force, or over feeble skill,
By more satanic cunning, craft, and skill.
God's glory and the welfare of the world
Were not their aims. Enthroning self supreme,
Like horrid deities, well pleased with blood.
The sacrifices offered to themselves
Were hecatombs of precious human lives!
Widows and orphans their libations poured
In bitter tears! Habiliments of woe,
Were fitting tokens of their victories!
And wails of broken hearts their music sweet!
In league with death, against their fellow men,
Themselves, his agents, victims were at last!

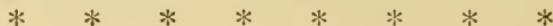
Behold the conqueror proudly styled “The Great,”
Young Alexander flushed with victory!
His Macedonian phalanx, like a rock
Hurled at a reedy brake, went crashing through
The armies of Darius, opening up
His bloody way to an imperial throne.
How long? for one brief giddy hour! and then—
A bacchanalian revel! Lo! he lies . . .
Conquered in ignominious death!—the cup,
The base and treacherous cup his conqueror!
The cup that fascinates both great and small,
Deluding, with an hour’s delirious joy,
To rob of fortune, virtue, reason, life!
The cup, Apollyon’s most successful bait,
More potent than the strategems of war,
Entrapping warriors, statesmen, poets, kings!—
The kings in Pompey’s triumph led in chains
Were never vanquished by so base a foe.
Abimelech and Sisera themselves,
Though slain by women’s hands, died noble deaths
Compared with those who, conquered by the cup,
Were first befooled, enslaved, and then destroyed.
O base and traitorous cup! Thou cheatest men,
With counterfeit of happiness and life,
To lead them on to misery and death!
Yet Alexander filled full many a page
Of pompous history, and found a host
To write the praises of his mighty deeds.
Dost thou, O Enoch, covet now his fame?
Oh thou hast triumphed over death itself,

By him who is “the way, the truth and Life.”
 Thou walkedst in the path of life with God,
 And from the fount of life didst daily drink.
 Well didst thou leave the cup of sinful joy
 To those who blindly choose the way of death.
 Well didst thou leave the scroll of fame to men
 Who wish to seem the hero here in dust.
 Thy pure ambition was to stand approved
 In sight of Heaven, before thy Father, God !
 Brief though thy record here, 'tis writ in light,
 And thy memorial ever shines on high.

Behold, O fellow men, the highest type
 Of merely mortal man ! Behold true life,
 In fullest blossom in the light of God !
 Mortality itself drew back abashed
 From presence so divine. Its dismal shade
 Could never darken one illumined of God.

Life's secret for all ages lies in this,
 “He walked with God,” was caught from earth, to
 God !

But did the man of God ignore the joys
 Of human friendship, love, and earthly home ?
 Or did he speed untimely flight to Heaven ?
 Nay, brief his life for that primeval age,
 Yet lingered he his blessed year of years;
 And in his hallowed home were many born
 Of loving sons and daughters, leaving proofs
 How well agree home joys with holiest life !



Adieu fair city of the sons of God !
Passing to other scenes, with speed of thought,
We pause reluctant in the realms of Cain.
A high walled city frowns on our approach,
With heavy gates, and bustling battlements.
And hark ! Amidst the din of busy life,
The sound of martial music, and the clang
Of armored hosts alarm the startled ear !
Yet, curious to behold, we still draw near.
“ Hold ! ” crys a sentinel, “ what ho ! ” “ Advance,
And give the countersign ! Or wait the guard ! ”
We pause, but, with the liberty of dreams,
Pass like a shade ! (They seemed not shades to us
Too like, alas ! to men of our own age.)

Within we see the “ stir of life ” (so called).
Can life, without a soul, be truly life ?
Or where the soul lies dormant, or forgot ?
Where all its highest int’rests, truest hopes,
And noblest faculties are left to drift
To utter wreck and ruin, past all hope ?
And why ? To win the phantoms of an hour !

Ah ! life without a soul is like the grin,
The dread convulsive grin of ghastly ghosts ! —
To galvanize to momentary life
The dead soul-suicide, who, for such life,
Will forfeit right to immortality,
Is mockery to make of God himself,
From whom all true life springs.

But dost thou think,

O fellow mortal, our discourse too harsh ?
'Tis as the north wind, to disperse the fogs,—
Though warm, yet charged with miasmatic death.—
To bring a clearer, purer atmosphere.

Dost thou affirm this life is beautiful,
Though lived for earth alone ? and dost thou point
To blooming, happy childhood, yet untaught
To seek the things above ? 'Tis not denied.
The smile of death may still be beautiful ;—
The bright hues of the bubble, e'er it bursts ;—
Even destruction may array itself
In flaming splendor ; yea e'en Satan seems
An angel fair, of light ;—the crawling worm
May have a beauty though it die unchanged,
And miss the glory yet to be revealed :
But that alone is true and noble life
Which e'er proves true to true and noble ends.

Is that true life which finds its terminus
The sad and silent city of the dead ?
Or that which, born on earth, transferred to Heaven,
With deeper, purer, more exuberant joy,
Expands, intensifies, abides for aye ?

Here flourishes, indeed, what men call life,
O city, far from God's sweet light and peace,
All full of bustle, noise, and enterprise,
But also full of envy, hate, and pride,
"Debate, deceit, malignity," and strife,
Sharp competition and oppression foul.
Some joys indeed are thine, the very thrill

Of war-like preparation fills the heart
Of fallen man with high, exultant hope,
And life, intense, rages along with death.
In heat of battle,—and when victory
Brief transport brings ;—but certain doom awaits
All those who strive for earthly crowns alone
(E'en crowned awhile, or prostrate on the field).

Hear then, ye men whose lust, and greed, and pride
Rule all your souls, the judgment which shall fall
When all your seeds of sin are fully ripe.

Oh dreadful day, when earth itself, with Heaven,
And seas shall join to spue you forth, in wrath,
From this sad earth your wickedness hath cursed.
O day of universal woe and fear !
O day of darkness, deep despair, and death !
God's mercy sweet, too long despised, abused,
And scorned, has taken her sad flight to Heaven,
And stern avenging wrath stands in her place,
To whelm a guilty world in righteous doom.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
Gal. v. 25.

O DEATH, WHERE IS THY STING?

O GRAVE, WHERE IS THY

FAITH TRIUMPHANT
BOOK VI.
OVER DEATH

Victory!



Yea,
though I walk
through the valley
of the Shadow
of Death,
I will fear
No Evil.



PROEM.

O Father, to whom shall we go,
When sorrow or sin doth prevail,
To whom bring our care and our woe,
When all other comforters fail?

Look down, we beseech thee, look down
From Heaven, thy glorious throne,
O fright not our hearts with thy frown:
Remember our souls are thine own.

In infinite mercy, behold
The weakness and frailty of men,
Now springing like grass from the mold,
Now moldring to ashes again.

Thou dost in all rapturous light,
Sublime, inaccessible, dwell.
Our thoughts, in their loftiest flight,
Thy greatness and glory excel.

Dawn's feeble and tremulous light,
That steals over night's wintry skies,
Is type of our wisdom and might:—
Our rapture is mingled with sighs.

Our journey with sorrow is rife,
And darkened with sin and with night.
“With thee is the fountain of life,”
“In thy light we ever see light.”



BOOK SIXTH.

At last the time drew near when God should call
His servant Adam home.

Well worn with years.

And weary with the wickedness and woe
Of this sad, God-forsaken world, relieved
Of all responsibility by age
Of earthly office, or of toil and care,
He turned more frequently his longing thoughts
To that sweet rest he hoped would soon begin,
Whene'er the prophecy should be fulfilled,
“The woman’s seed shall bruise the serpent’s head.”

And thus he spoke

“O dear and faithful wife,
My sweet companion near a thousand years,
Our pilgrimage is drawing towards its close.
Dost thou not long for rest?

Our way indeed
Has been most pleasant. God has greatly blessed
His most unworthy servants, and has spared
All needless penalties and pains of sin.
Just, were his wrath, had sudden vengeance seized
Our guilty souls, and cut us off at once!
And yet how long his patience has endured!
How infinite his mercy and his love,
Breathing sweet promise e’en of life through death,
And filling all our lives with earthly good.

And yet I yearn for home. The way seems long
That brings us back to God from banishment.
No life is fully blest apart from him.
Our lives that like the angels' might have been
Perpetual youth, in God's bright presence blest,
But doomed to be but transitory breath,
In exile spent, and sojourn far from God,
Are now drawn out in feebleness and pain,
And burdened with the very weight of years.
But worse, alas, far worse the gathering gloom
That shrouds this sinful scene with deepening guilt.

Once, men respected my authority,
And well obeyed my patriarchal laws,
And loved and served the true and living God;
But now my sons despise my feeble age,
And wicked men, grown bold, scorn all restraint,
And turn aside to vanity and lies.

May God remove us where 'the wicked cease
From troubling, and the weary are at rest.'
Surely thy promised seed that rest shall bring,
Yet this I long to ask, why thine? not mine?"

Then Eve

With meekness and humility,
And deep prophetic foresight well replied
"Through me came sin, through me the sinless one
Shall bring redemption from all sin and death !
How marvelous the mercy of our God !
His power and wisdom far beyond all praise,

Who greater grace returns for greatest sin,
Who blessings grants us e'en through chastisement,
And greatest triumphs brings from dire defeat.”

But Adam asked “when shall this triumph be?
For day by day the powers of Satan grow,
And violence and crime range through the earth!
O sainted Enoch, early snatched away
From witnessing the downward course of men,
Thy gentle spirit surely is at rest,
And with the Lord whom thou on earth didst love
His love has spared thee e'en the pangs of death,
And taken thee from evil yet to come.
How would thy pure and holy spirit grieve
To see this day. Yet thou didst prophesy
Great judgment on the guilty race of men,
Shall *then* the victory and rest begin,
The rule of Satan cease, and men become
True friends and servants of the living God?”

Alas! Too soon, O Adam, dost thou hope
Peace for a guilty world. But thine own peace
Is near, though pangs of bitter grief and pain
Must rend thee, soul and body, e'er 'tis thine.

Ah, who can tell the loneliness and woe
That long and darkly shadowed all thy soul,
When Eve her fond farewell *breathed* forth at last,
Fair Eve, for whose dear love thou once didst choose
To forfeit Paradise, who since has proved,
Nine hundred years and more, a friend so true,
So lovely, tender, fond, supremely dear,

That thou hast found in her thy purest joy,
Thy greatest strength, thy wisest counsellor,
Thy sweetest solace in adversity,
Yea half thy life! far more than half thy life!

Not long in loneliness thou'l linger here
(More lonely now than erst in Paradise
Where once 'twas said "not good to be alone,"
Though hosts innumerable call thee sire),
The summons thou dost wait shall come at last
To call thee hence, and, happy, hie thee home!

* * * * *

Around the bedside of the aged man,
First Patriarch of his race, stood mourning sons,
And weeping daughters, waiting for the hour,
Appointed by the Lord to loose the bands
That bound his spirit to its house of clay,
And hide it henceforth from sub-stellar eyes.
What holy tender ministries were theirs!
How deep and pure their reverential love!
What sacred sorrow filled their heavy hearts!
And yet how sweet the hope, when all was o'er,
"Their own sad loss, his everlasting gain."

Oft through the day the bulletins went forth,
While life still struggled tremblingly with death,
Throughout the city, thence through all the realm
And when his corse was laid at last to rest,
His dust to mingle soon with kindred dust,
"Great lamentation over him was made,"
While countless hosts beheld his burial.

Thus full of years and honors, full of peace,
He closed his quiet uneventful life.

Fit representative of all our race,
He brought the curse of heaven upon us all.
Our real probation was in him fulfilled.
In him we stood and fell. The dread decree
That “dying thou shalt die,” “passed on us all,”
“Because that all had sinned.” No further hope
Remains for us in our own righteousness
(Enoch himself was saved by faith alone).
But though his guilt seemed great, still greater far
Appears in him the mercy of the Lord,
And all his tender care for those he loves.
And in him too we read, epitomised,
The history of human life on earth.
*He sinned and sorrowed, lived so many years,
Had several sons and daughters, then he died.*
But oh, how great the contrast in his death,
With that of him who represents our life !

Soon as his struggling spirit bursts its bonds,
Emerging from the darkness of the flesh
Into the light of supernatural realms,
He sees, astonished, angel spirits stand
Awaiting his release, with tender love,
Even as parents, and attendant friends
Await the advent of a new born babe.
The friends receiving his farewell to earth
Stand filled with grief, and woe and solemn awe,
With freely flowing tears, and sighs, and moans;

But those who welcome him to brighter worlds
Greet him with joy, and view his mourning friends
With smiles of pity, such as parents give
When tiny fingers, lifted to their view
Display some little hurt, scarce visible,
While flowing tears bespeak their sympathy.

Now, with his parting spirit, let us rise
To loftier outlook than the loftiest height
Of this sub-lunar scene.

O blessed soul!

Set free from shadows, forms of flesh which hid
Substantial entities, and oft deceived
The very wisest of the worldly wise,
Engaging all their thoughts with earthly things,
That soon must crumble to the earth again
(E'en as the clouds dissolve and disappear,
Or shadows vanish with surrounding light),
While Heaven's enduring verities, forgot,
Were counted unrealities,—and lost!—
Set free from sin and sorrow, evermore,
Admitted now to God's own presencee bright,
From whom all shadows flee away abashed,
Thou here, at last, hast entered into light!

Triumphant, happy soul! now purified
From every stain, set free from close restraint
Of fleshly cerements of pain and death,
And vivified with true celestial fire,
Thou now canst "see and know as thou art known,"
Thou now may'st reach the very highest source

Of truest life, which thou didst wisely choose,
And diligently seek through life on earth.
But who can venture to yon rapturous heights,
Save those from gross mortality disrobed,
And purified from every taint of sin?

Awe struck, yet filled with wonder and delight
We stand afar, and view the amazing scene!

What overwhelming glories greet our eyes!
Behold the “innumerable company”
Of white robed angels, with their glistening wings!
O'er spreading all the vast expanse of heaven,
A glorious galaxy of blending lights,
Enmassed, like summer clouds, all white and grand,
With gleaming splendor of reflected rays,
Proceeding from the central vault of heaven!
Whence this effulgence, more than men can bear!
So dazzling bright, so “unaccessible,”
So “full of glory,” that the mind is lost!
The while our soul lies prostrate and adores!

Lost to our eyes, yon happy soul flies on,
His convoy bright but for a moment seen,
Then swallowed in the light ineffable
Which flows from Him who sits upon the throne!

* * * *

What mortal mind can pierce yon vale of light,
Or dimly guess the blessedness of him
Who now receives the welcome of his Lord?
Forgotten, for a reason, quite forgot,
All lesser joys, affections, raptures, hopes!

The great concerns of time all vanish now!
Enough that God is found! and “God is love!”

Enraptured soul! the dearest love of earth,
The truest, purest, strongest, sweetest, best,
Was but a feeble type of this great love
Which still transcends the power of mind and heart!

O depth unfathomable! height unseen!
Immeasurable breadth! and length beyond
The utmost range of highest human thought!
Unfolded now part of the mystery
Of God’s eternal love, to be revealed
To wondering sons of men in coming years,
Thou see’st, with heart o’erwhelmed (what God
declares

Shall surely come to pass), both God and man
In union strange and sweet! *Thy promised Son,*
“The Son of Man,” the very “Son of God!”
And in a lesser sense, yet full of bliss,
Thou see’st his saved ones, also sons of God!
Exalted soul, couldst thou now tell thy sons
The undiscoverable truth of God,
Now made so plain to thee, methinks that all
Should turn their backs on earth, their hearts towards
heaven!

Yet better testimony they reject,
“Refusing him who spake (for God) on earth,
They turn away from him who speaks from heaven,”
And even scorn the Incarnate Word of God!!

Awhile we wait and wonder, at our post,

While happy spirits pass and oft repass,
When, issuing from the glory, we perceive
And recognize our father's soul once more
Bent on some happy errand he appears,
Still led by bright angelic messengers.
A more ethereal essence his, than theirs.
And still he needs their tutelage and care.

Convoyed by them he seeks a happy group
Of spirits like his own, redeemed from Earth,
“The spirits of just men made perfect” now.

But scarce does he appear in sight, when, lo!
The fairest one (though all are beautiful),
Leaving the rest, with eager happy haste,
Comes like a beam of light, to welcome him.
Reflected in his count'nce, beautified,
And all suffused with heavenly lustre, glows
The pure and holy joy that fills his soul.

O happy, happy pair! Safe, safe at home!
Ne'er to be parted more, not e'en by death,
Nor any disagreement, mutual doubt,
Misunderstanding, pique, nor any lapse of love,
They now renew a sweet relationship!
Not now, as once of yore, exclusive ties,
Depending on conditions of the earth
(Though sweet the slavery of these earthly bonds,
And tempting oft to undue love, supreme),
But one which brings them nearer still to God.
They “marry not, nor give in marriage” now,

For, "wedded to one husband," in the bonds
Of purest love, and sweetest confidence,
Where green-eyed jealousy no more can sting,
They, like the angels, give their love to God,
Their earthly love was but a type of this.

And yet peculiar friendships still exist,
Though that dear word seems tame and cold to tell
The new relationships of sacred love,
Most pure and tender, intimate and sweet,
That bind congenial spirits here in Heaven.
All, all, indeed, are found congenial here,
And all, of every tribe, are one in Christ.
Yet there are ranks and orders, yea, we find
Each soul distinct, and only like itself,
With character and beauty all its own,
As "one star differs from another star
In glory," or the flowers, in all their tribes,
Differ, though beauteous all. So mystic ties
Of spirit friendship still bind loving souls.
And revelations, too, are often made
Between those souls, who by God's providence
Were bound on Earth, yet knew each other not.
Ah, glad surprises there shall be in heaven!
Not that the bonds once loosed by welcome death
Are riveted again. All, all are free.
Yet, as the various chords of music blend
In one sweet harmony, or as the stars
Conjoin to light one happy traveler,
Or as the members of one family
Together dwell, in purest, sweetest love,

So dwell, in harmony, the blest in heaven;
While each may find some choicest friendships there.

We may not now describe the outlook held
By Adam and his company towards Earth,
Nor by what means the tidings are conveyed
Of all the strange events that happen there,
Nor how they even witness for themselves
The wondrous drama, as upon a stage,
Within their easy ken. But we perceive
They lose not interest in the earth's affairs,
On which "the angels still desire to look,"
And God himself surveys with deep concern,
But often from the heavenly glories turn,
To view their earthly friends, and mark the course
Of human life.

But dost thou doubt their power!
How canst thou doubt, since from the very clouds
The modern Sage allured a messenger,
So swift, so sure, so subtle and so strong,
That once 'twas deemed the weapon of God's wrath!
Yet moderns send it on their messages,
And teach the tiny threads to thrill with thought.
And, earlier still, a simple artisan
Had found the key t'unlock the depths of space,
And view the secrets of the stellar worlds.

Not through such slender cords departed souls
Their swift intelligence receive from Earth,
Or, through such instruments as men devise,
Obtain their panoramic views of life.

Not theirs omniscience, to discern the whole,
Even of what this little planet shows
Of him whose “judgments are unsearchable,”
To make, redeem or rule the sons of men.
But vaster far their knowledge of the world
Than all the wondrous modern press conveys.
Each act on earth a flash of light reveals
(Nor can the darkness ever hide from God),
And every breath of sound whispers abroad
Earth’s secrets through all spiritual realms.

Say not our atmosphere must limits fix
To uttered thought,—that sound must ride on waves,
And dies away in air. Denied is this
By one who reasons well, with other claims
Of theorists who vaunt themselves the friends
Of certain scientific truth, but teach
Their own inventions to the credulous.
And so one generation rightly deems
The science of the past, “falsely so called”

But this we know, “for every idle word
That men shall speak, they give account to God.”

Come join we now this group, and view with them
The course of human life.

Lo, one by one,
Like ancient land-marks, patriarchs pass away!
What strange diversity in human life!
Some, opening for a few brief days, their eyes,

With wonder catch a fleeting glimpse of life
(Uncomprehended, incompletely shared),
And then pass forth to mysteries beyond.
With not less wonder those they leave behind
Ask “ why come they at all ? or go so soon ? ”

But others serve through all the weary war,
And when their battle’s o’er, they linger on,
And linger on, until they long to go !

Contemplate now, in few successive scenes,
The great events of human history.
Behold we first, that dread catastrophe,
Most awful in the annals of all time,
Which swept away, at once, the race of man !
O dreadful judgment of offended Heaven !
O’erwhelming all the earth in ruin dire !
O’erwhelming too our thoughts, and shuddering
hearts !

How can imagination’s trembling hand
Depict the scene ? How can our fainting souls
Endure the dreadful sight ? my blood runs cold,
E’en from a glimpse, at distance most remote,
Of woe and desolation so complete !
Lo, on the billows of a shoreless sea,
The solitary ark ! the world’s last hope !
A fragment of the universal wreck !
It drifts at mercy of the pelting storm,
Without a rudder, pilot, chart or port !
The swash of surging seas against its sides,
With wild and woeful wailings of the winds,

The only requiems of a buried world !
All nature wears the drapery of woe,
A trailing, cloudy veil, of deepest black.
O weary waste of waves, O vast expanse,
How lonely, empty, desolate and drear !
How tedious in your sameness ! yet how dread
In all devouring greed t' engulf a world !
What dreadful secrets in your bosom lie !
What treasures rare in your remorseless depths !
Your greatest treasure now, a ruined world !
Our faney peers beneath your inky waves.
What desolation vast appals the sight !
Cities, and towns, and cultivated fields,
All rife with human industry and art,
And desert wastes with scarce a traveler ;
Temples of pleasure, penal cells of crime ;
Well crowded streets, and lonely hermit caves ;
The haunts of drones, and busy factories ;
The homes of love and luxury and wealth,
And wretched huts of grimy poverty ;
Embattled hosts, and fondly loving swains ;
Gay festive companies, and funeral trains ;
The great and small ; those bent with hoary age,
And little infants in their mothers' arms ;
Young men and maidens ; merry children ;—all,
All sunk in one o'erwhelming wave of woe !

But dost thou doubt ; Dost shudder at the thought,
And say “this cannot be, for God is good !”
Lo, Herculaneum, and Pompeii !
Perpetual monuments of sudden wrath,

Or vengeance long delayed, but swift at last.
Ah, darker ruin than the liquid depths
First overwhelmed the wretched sons of men.
The floods of sin,—a surge of wickedness,
Which issued from the very depths of Hell,
Swept o'er a guilty world, and filled the hearts
Of those who madly turned away from God!

“And were no lamentations heard in heaven?”

Methinks 'twas God's own hand that wiped away
The tears from saintly eyes. And God himself
“Was grieved at heart,” His own works brought
him grief,

Though works of wisdom, goodness, power and love.
But dost thou ask

“How could the ‘Lord repent
That ever he had made man on the earth’
As seems his word to teach?”

’Tis safe to say
It caused him deep regret *for man's own sake*
(At least for those who scorned his saving power),
His work *the cause, not subject of regret.*
(’Tis thus the judge with grief the sentence speaks
Even of those most justly doomed to death.)
Or if the act itself were also mourned,
Which being gave to souls foredoomed to death,
It was as one might mourn who comes to bring
Glad tidings of salvation to the lost,
But knows, full well, that some will hear to scorn,
And bring upon themselves still deeper woe.

Now let us humbly learn the lessons plain,
The fatal folly to presume too far
On God's forebearance in a course of sin.
(And is't not folly to presume at all?)
The empty hope God cannot whelm the world,—
And yet the merey of a patient God,
And wondrous grace to all who trust his word.
Noah with faith, which in a Godless world
Appears sublime, devotes his years of toil,
His reputation, fortune, friendships, all
To do the work of faith and hope towards God.
He gains his blest reward; and in the ark
Safe shut by God's own hand, with those he loves,
The object of his Father's tend'rest care,
Amidst the whirl of overwhelming wrath,
Rides out the storm. Faith triumphs over floods.

This scene is past! A new world now appears
Emerging from the ruins of the first.
The bow of promise spans the heaven's wide arch,
Dark muttering wrath retires in distant clouds,
Bounty sheds forth her stores of life and light,
While gentle merey leads her precious charge
Forth from the ark, with peace and sounding joy,
And sweet faced hope invites to new emprise.
All things conspire to point man's soul to God,
To teach him gratitude, and trustful faith,
Obedience, and piety, and love.

But soon, alas, the Tempter's hand, once more,
Betrays its working in the hearts of men.

Behold the builders! laboring hard (in vain)
To build without the blessing of the Lord.
God had declared

“Be fruitful, multiply,
Replenish *all the earth*, subdue all things,
And have dominion over all.”

But men

Distrust the truth and wisdom of their God,
More anxious far to “make themselves a name,”
And build themselves a lasting home on earth,
Than magnify God’s name, deserve his praise,
Fulfil their destiny divine on earth,
And find at last their Father’s home above.

And so they say “Go to, and let us build
A city and a tower whose top shall reach
Towards heaven, a sign of unity and power,
A centre in the illimitable plain,
“Lest we be scattered all abroad on earth.”

O foolish builders! Wise your earthly schemes
Were there no God to call you to account.
But God forgotten, ne’er forgets his will,
Which, long despised, shall sure prevail at last.

In vain ye now unite! Your mighty schemes
How petty in God’s sight, whose plans embrace
Eternity, e’en to eternity!

His gifts ye now abuse, *mysterious speech*
(Destined to bring, through interchange of thought
All men into a union strong and sweet),
And reason (given for counsels wise and good!)

“Your rulers counsel take against the Lord,
To break his bands asunder,” e’en those bands
Which bind their souls in peace and love to him.
Ah, what if God reclaim his precious gifts ?
Nay. Great his mercy in the midst of wrath.
But dire confusion falls on all their plans,
And e’en their very tongues!—

Behold them stand
Astonished and perplexed ! each workman views
His comrade suddenly transformed, in speech,
Into a babbler, and a foreigner!
And hardly certain of his mother tongue,
He scarce remembers most familiar words!

Ah, different far the time when God shall come
To grant his spirit to the prayers of men,
When, “in one place,” and joined “in one accord,”
They meet to build His kingdom, and proclaim
That name so far above all earthly names.
From every clime and every tongue and tribe
The men, with wonder, hear in their own tongues
The amazing grace, and “wondrous works of God.”

But lo, a nearer contrast greets our eyes.
Abram, amidst an unbelieving world,
Receives the titles high, a “Friend of God,”
The “Father of the Faithful,” for all time.
Unlike the Babel Builders, going forth,
At God’s command, from kindred, home, and friends,
And certain dwelling place, to dwell in tents,
He seeks a better country, and a home

More sure and safe than Babel Builders dreamed,
A city broad and high, not one “whose top
Should reach to heaven,” but whose foundation
strong
Is planted there, and laid by God himself!

“Its builder and its maker, God,” it shines
In his own light, and with him shall endure.
In honor of a faith so true and tried
The Lord a sure and lasting covenant made
With Abram and his seed, for coming time,
That they should be “his people,” “He their God,”
And yet still more he tried his faith and love.
He even promised, in his childless age,
That in his seed all nations should be blessed:
Of many nations, too, that he should be
The honored father, in the years to come.
And yet (scarce grown) this promised son was
claimed,
At Abraham’s own hand, in sacrifice!
Oh, height of faith, and trustful love to God!
“He spared not his own son, but gave him up”
As due to God, since he had claimed his own;
Yet “trusted” still that God would “raise him up
E’en from the dead,” nor was his faith deceived.
Oh, type divine of God’s more wondrous love,
Who freely gave his own Beloved Son,
To ransom those whose only claim was wrath.

Unworldly man of God! content to dwell
A pilgrim stranger here, thy filial faith,

Not seeking earth's rewards, but heavenly grace,
Hath won the highest blessings earth can yield,
Beyond all learning, genius, skill or power,
Hath made thy name renowned through all the earth.
And riches too and high respect and power
Were thy rewards. But, better far than all,
God's gracious favor, which thy soul hath found
Is "life," his loving kindness more than life."

Ye men of Earth in vain ye toil and strive
Against the will of Heaven. If God denies
The boons of earth ye prize above his grace,
They 'scape your grasp; or if he grants your wish
Without his blessing, they may curses prove,
To cheat your souls of his divine reward.

The years roll on. Lo! Jacob, in his grief,
A fugitive from Esau's dreaded wrath,
Lonely and homeless in the wilderness,
Looks from his hard unsheltered couch to God.
Adown the shining stairway angels haste
To bring him comfort, and to show how near
To earthly exiles is the heavenly home.
And shining ones, earth born, look fondly down
And wait to welcome soon the wanderer home.

A few years more! we see the youth again,
Who went forth, poor and lonely, with his staff,
Return a patriarch, rich with family trains,
And flocks and herds. But now with greater dread,
Not for himself, but those he loves e'en more.
He hears that Esau's war-like bands approach.

We who from loftier heights can see the end,
May smile to see the deep distress and woe
That fill the patriarch's breast. But very soon
Faith triumphs over fears, and dangers too,
For Jacob knows the “secret of the Lord,”
And wrestles, not with Esau, but with one
Of mightier power, and finally prevails.
He wins the mighty name of *Israel*.

And now see Joseph in his prison cell,
Friendless and hopeless, hoped he not in God
Betrayed by his own brethren, and abused
And wronged because to truth and virtue true.

Did bitterness towards man, distrust towards God,
Or dark despair towards his own soul prevail?
No! more than conqueror, through faith divine,
Which firmly held God's promise from his youth,
Amidst the darkness of his own deep night,
He shed forth light, which blessed his fellow-men,
And when his faith had stood the sorest test,
It gained a great and marvelous reward.
He saw his dreams most wondrously fulfilled!
(More glorious still faith's great rewards in heaven !)

The centuries like seasons pass away.
Behold a nation long in thraldom held,
Yet “heirs of promise,” “seed of Abraham,”
And objects of the covenant love of God!
Ah, cruel is the bondage they endure!
Like beasts of burden, scourged to thankless tasks,

They drag out lives more bitter far than death.
Is it in righteous judgment for the sin
Of those who heard not their own brother's cry
But for a price betrayed to alien hands?
O monstrous sin! great is thy punishment!
But now, at last, God hears their bitter cry.
He shows himself almighty to redeem,
E'en from the cruel slavery of sin.
He raises up a prophet truly great,
And worthy to lead forth his captive hosts.

O wondrous faith of holy men of God!
(Applauding angels view with great delight
Thou sacred principle of life divine!
What mighty deeds, what victories o'er self,
And o'er the world, and all the assaults of hell,
Thy mighty power hath nerved men to achieve!
What noble virtues thou hast wrought in men!
What love to God, what happy trust, what hope
In darkest hours, what patience, courage, strength,
What cheerful zeal to do God's holy will,
What charity to all the human race!
What readiness in sacrifice to yield
The dearest loves and proudest hopes on earth!

So Moses, reared in Pharaoh's court a prince,
With Joseph's fame before him, might have won
A prouder place, and ruled as Egypt's king.
But faith prevailed. He chose a humbler sphere.
Content to suffer with the saints on earth,
If he might find with them the living God.

He turned from false religion's flattering hopes,
And all the honors of the royal court,
And "chose reproach," with slaves despised and
wronged,

"Refusing to be called" proud Pharoah's son,
Preferring Heaven to brief career of sin.

But God had joys and honors higher far
Than Pharaoh ever knew, wherewith to crown
The faith of one, who truly honored God.

Behold the flaming bush, yet unconsumed,
Whence God to Moses spake his holy name.
The wilderness, henceforth, no more appeared
An awful solitude; but God himself

Drew very near, and made it holy ground,
The trysting place between his soul and God.
O happy spot where man doth find his Lord,
In desert wastes, or in cathedrals filled

With prostrate worshippers; in humblest hut,
Or palace grand; closet or crowded streets;
In glorious temple at Jerusalem,
Or by despised Samaria's humble well.

And there is life! all else the realm of death!

Yet God doth wait to show himself to men.

He all things with his holy presence fills,
And through all things makes known himself to
those

Of humble mind, who truly seek their God.

Oh, happy eyes, that, in his wondrous works,
Behold the beauties of his majesty!

(While those who seek not, see, yet not perceive.)

But most distinguished favor his who saw,
With his own eyes, the glory of the Lord,
And heard, with his own ears, his awful voice.
Him God commissioned for a mighty work,
To free his kindred from their cruel yoke,
And lead a proud and mighty nation forth
To glory, liberty, and light divine.

Yea, more (Oh, better far than one brief reign
On Egypt's crumbling throne), 'twas his to stand
On Sinai's mount, and thence convey from God
That holy law which binds the human race!
And yet still more, 'twas his to typify
The King himself, the very Son of God,
“A prophet like to him” whom God should raise
To teach, to guide, to rule, to intercede,
And lead his people to the promised land.

A single life of such illustrious faith
Redeems a nation, and illumines an age.
But he who toils God's word to render void,
With learning, genius, wit, or eloquence,
Weakness and worthlessness shall find them all
Compared with faith, and fruitless of all good.
Oblivion is his spirit's highest hope,
Or fame to which oblivion's gloom is light.
He maketh e'en “his memory to rot.”
Were human life confined to this brief stage,
Vain were the noblest lessons of the past.
And Epicurus then were truly wise,
“Ensure the passing moment for thyself,”
Let others labor for the human weal,

And for the future grandly do and dare.
The great Lawgiver was a fool sublime,
And thou art wise, only, when, like a worm,
Thou erawlest close to earth, and grovelest deep,
Content to perish like a worm at last.

O chosen race of God! what wondrous deeds
Of Heaven's amazing grace were wrought for thee!
Not for thy virtue or thy faithfulness,
But from the depths of God's eternal love
And covenant truth. He chooseth all his sons,
And to his glorious image fashioneth
Their souls alike. He from the "very stones
Can raise up children unto Abraham."
But those who scorn his grace he liftest up
To heights of fame and power to throw them down
To depths of shame. He even makes their wrath
To praise his name. Thus Pharaoh and his hosts
Called forth God's power, and showed his faithfulness,
Both to redeem his own, and crush his foes.

God led his people through the wilderness,
And showed them wondrous signs and mighty deeds.
He fed them day by day with bread from heaven
(Save on the sixth he gave them two days' food,
The seventh none, to sanctify the day),
He kept their raiment that it waxed not old,
And caused the smitten rock with streams to flow,
And gave them victory o'er desert foes.
But more than all, from Sinai's flaming mount,

In thunder tones he spake his righteous law,
And gave them all his holy oracles.

For forty years they saw his mighty works,
But “tempted, proved, and grieved” their patient
Lord,

And (oh, sad thought, which all should take to heart)
They *missed the promised land through unbelief.*

Oh, trembling heart! weigh well this solemn tale,
“Lest unto thee a promise being left,”
Of yet more glorious rest, thou too, at last,
Should even “seem,” through unbelief,” to fail,
And, loving earth too well, “come short” of Heaven!

Yet some were found who faithful proved, and true,
And even on the pilgrimage were born
Those who believed, and “entered into rest.”

Thus, in epitome, we read the tale
Of human life, through this world-wilderness.

Moses and Aaron yield their lives to Heaven,
And other warriors rise to serve their God.
See Joshua, leading on God’s conquering sons,
Great type of Jesus in his name and deeds,
Strong in the Lord of hosts, and in his might,
Great in his valor, greater still in faith.

Lo, Jordan’s waves an over flowing flood,
Rolled back at their approach; behold the walls
Of Jericho obey their trumpets’ sound;
The sun stands still o’er Gibeon, the moon
Above the valley of Ajalon waits;

And God, to make their vict'ry more complete,
Rains death from heaven upon their impious foes.

But time would fail to tell the illustrious names
Of all the glorious host, who lived by faith,
Who triumphed over Satan, sin, and self,
And vanquished death, and won eternal life.
Behold the noble company of saints,
Who, honoring God, by trusting all his words,
Have gained the praise they prized, which comes
from God.

About the forms of those who walk with him
A halo glows of glorious heavenly light,
Which shines effulgent through the mists of time,
And, like the stars, high in the vault of heaven,
On latest generations sheds its rays.

Prophets, and heroes, priests and pious kings,
And holy women too, who loved their Lord,
Apostles, martyrs and confessors join
To glorify their God, and seek his face.
We view with gladness from our lofty height
Their glorious victories o'er sin and death,
And, as each conqueror seeks his heavenly rest,
We join the rapturous shouts of “Weleome home!”

And still they come, from every realm and clime,
From every nation he that feareth God,
And worketh righteousness acceptance finds.

But lo, the mighty multitude who turn
Away from God, and from his heavenly rest,
Believing not the true and living God,

And earing naught for high and holy truth,
Nor for that pure and blest "inheritance
Reserved for those kept by God's power through
faith."

"Their God their belly, glorying in their shame,
And minding earthly things," they forfeit Heaven,
And find their doom with those that know not God.
Oh, wretched doom, endurable on earth,
While *mercy* yet endured, and God still sought
To win by kindness hard unthankful hearts,
"Making his sun to rise" alike on all,
"The evil and the good, and sending rain
Upon the unjust even as the just."
But Oh, the "*wrath* of God!" who can endure?
How dreadful even in a world of hope!
Unutterably dread in yon dark world,
Where hope and *mercy* never more ean eome!

It need not be that God's avenging hand
Itself should aught of torture now impose.
'Twere deepest pain that guilty souls must feel
The dreadful pangs of self-inflicted doom,
Even as suicides in anguish writhe
From poison chosen madly by themselves.

Preferring self to God, they have their choicer.
Left to themselves, removed far off from God,
They find, without His blessing, life is death,
A living death, from which 'twere joy to die.
They know the utmost now that earth can yield.
The emptiness of earthly hopes and joys,

And all the idols of a worldly soul,—
Folly, vexation, vanity, and sin,
They know the bitterness of vain remorse,
The heaviness of hearts that have no hope.

And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. 1 John v. 4.

Via Crucis,
Via lucis.

Via fortis
Via mortis.

I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU

PARDON.

Reconciliation, and Peace,
Regeneration, Sanctification,
Adoption,
Eternal Life,
Inheritance Incorruptible,

EPilogue

JUDGEMENT.

Depart from me,
Ye Cursed,
Into Ever-lasting Fire,
Prepared
For the Devil
and his angels.

Matt. xxv. 41.

EPILOGUE.

Oh, for an angel's pen and pencil, skilled
To picture forth, in few successive scenes,
The tragic history of this fallen world!
'Tis difficult for us who dwell below,
Upon the very battlefield of life,
And mingle in the smoke and wild uproar,
And dire confusion of the shifting fight,
To view with all embracing gaze, serene,
The whole dread panorama, and to judge
How goes the battle, what its salient points.

Yet human art has wondrously portrayed
The most momentous scenes, and still may trace,
By aid divine, from other points of view,
The rise and progress of the whole great war.

Blind Milton's quickened sight could view afar,
Beyond the ken of men with worldly eyes,
Scenes awful and sublime, whose figures vast,
In dreadful darkness, or in lurid light,
Set forth the monstrous wickedness of sin.
And Polluck, from his heavenly height, could trace
Man's downward way, through all the "Course of
Time,"

And tell, in tones of deep solemnity,
The dreadful judgments that must surely come
On thoughtless, unbelieving sons of men.
And Bickersteth, in our own age, resumes

The solemn tale, with sweet pathetic power
And thought sublime, which "Yesterday, To-Day,
Forever," is the theme of thoughtful men,
While worldly men think chiefly of to-day.

And so the painter's art the story tells
Of human life, in vivid hues and forms.
Thus Cole, with force and beauty well combined,
Sets forth the "Voyage of Life."

An infant fair,
Sporting with flowers that deck his gallant barque,
Forth issuing from the dark and misty cave,
Whose cliffs above are draped with vailing clouds
(The strange, unknown, "somewhere," of nascent
life),
First views the life begun,—his little world
Shut in, and showing no horizon broad:
Nor looks he forth, e'en to the flowery banks.
A guardian angel guides his little boat.

Next we behold a youth, elate with hope,
And brimming o'er with joy, grasping the helm.
The landscape opens grandly to the view:
The river, broad and fair, winds to the sea,
With tropic richness lined, and stately trees,
In the receding distance, dwindling down;
And lo! a city, filling heaven's broad arch,
In visionary grandeur rising high,
With domes and towers, meets the astonished gaze.

Upon the shore the angel waves adieu.
But ah, the boy, unheeding, sees him not.

Forgetting all behind, he presses on,
With hand outstretched to grasp the promised joys.

But lo! The third grand scene! Behold the boat,
Oh, horror! On the very cataraet's verge
Ready to plunge into the dread abyss!
Is it?—It is the same! but oh, how changed!
How changed the boatman! Oh, how changed the
scene!
How dark the frowning clouds! How dread the
rocks,
And overhanging cliffs? Is it indeed
A vast and awful cavern, hid from heaven,
Through which the torrent storms its furious course?
Dark fiendish faces grin from rocks and clouds,
And see! The lonely voyager, now a man,
Struggling no more with oars, with clasped hands
Stands up to utter one despairing prayer!
The guardian angel, from a distant cloud,
Himself appears to tremble for his fate!
But now behold the end.

The night of death
Has cast its shroud of darkness over all.
The world, the busy world, with all its pomps,
With all its business, all its grand concerns,
And e'en the solid frame of earth itself,
Forgotten now, has vanished from the sight.
And now the little barque is issuing forth
Upon the ocean of eternity.
A hoary headed man now humbly bows,

And offers up his finished life to Heaven.

Will Heaven receive him?

Ah, 'twere dread indeed
If hope forsook him now, and only night,
The rayless night of deep and black despair
Ended his splendid dreams, his grand desires,
And all the hopeful voyage of his life.

But no. The light of hope gleams from above !
And on a shining stairway, reaching down
From Heaven itself, angels, descending, come
To meet, and bear the weary pilgrim home !

Thus brief the history of human life
Apart, from sin, the source of human woe.
The history, alas, of fallen man
Must chiefly be the history of sin.

The denizens of earth conceived in sin,
And shapen in iniquity by birth,
Knew not their deep disgrace in view of heaven,
Knew not their birthright lost by Adam's fall
As heirs of God's eternal love and grace.

They lived for earth alone, as mindless beasts,
Save, with more curious instincts, craft and skill,
They ruled the world as fallen sons of God,
And could not hide their heavenly origin.
They even copied virtues all divine,
Friendship, and courage, justice, love, and truth ;
They wrought great works, with heavenly enterprise.
With wisdom, industry, and patient skill,
Working as if they were not born to die;

They built great cities; founded empires vast;
Subdued and trained the strength of mighty beasts
To do their tasks; they harnessed in the winds
To grind their food, and waft them o'er the waves;
From fire and water they evoked a force
Obedient as an infant to their will,
Yet strong to draw an army o'er the earth,
Or drive the ark itself through ocean depths;
Another power they hid in sand-like grains
(Than Arab Genii pent, more potent far)
Of hideous might to do the work of death,
To rend the rocks, to belch out sulphurous flames
And bellow forth the thundrous rage of hell;
They even caught the lightning's vivid flash
To light their streets, and bear their messages;
They taught the metals how to utter forth
And treasure up the gems of thought sublime!

But we anticipate. Among the sons
Of those who serve the true and living God,
And chiefly those who honored most his Christ,
Those wondrous deeds were wrought. Yet even
those

Who knew him not, nor loved his holy name,
In art and letters wondrously excelled.
Yet born with powers immortal and divine,
Their thoughts scarce rose above the things of earth,
Or when their fancy soared to loftier heights,
It sought not wisdom true from one all wise,
But "changed the glory of Almighty God
Into an image" rude, of lifeless clay,

Or carved, perchance (with genius too divine
To stoop so low, in folly, shame and guilt),
From gems, and gold, or long enduring stone.
They heeded not God's voice through all his works,
Nor learned, nor sought his holy oracles.

God's word declares them all "without excuse,"
Doomed to eternal banishment from God!
The heart shrinks back, appalled at woe like this,
Yet strives in vain the ages to explore
Of hopeless gloom, to find some gleam of hope.

Ye learned philosophers, who still excuse
The guilt of those who turn away from God,
Come speak your mind. Bring wisdom more profound.

The destiny of our lost race declare.

Some boldly say,—

"We here on earth fulfill
Our destiny, to live and die like beasts!"

Oh, shameful thought, for man's immortal soul!
What then? When this brief day of life is o'er?
Answer! O conscience! For thyself declare
What recompense remains for heinous guilt?
If justice finds her end in earthly life,
Her utter failure proves her deep disgrace;
The fiends that fatten on their brothers' woes,
Scorning her threats, gain virtue's right rewards.
No! Human hearts revolt from lies like this.

But here the objector brings his utmost force,—

“Revolt they not from undue penalty?
And seems not endless punishment undue?”

So seems it. Human hearts can scarce conceive
The dreadful guilt of rebels 'gainst their God.
The crimes 'gainst men from which our hearts revolt,
Are palpable and near. We cannot see
How every sin must reach the heart of God,
As Tyrell's glancing shaft found Rufus' soul.
(And was not Tyrell's carelessness a crime?)
But many an arrow, missing human hearts,
Is aimed directly, solely at the King.
And every sin finds its recoil on God,
As every missile strikes, at last, the earth,
All sin rebellion, all rebellion sin.
And no rebellion can abide with him;
If unrepented, unatoned, it brings
Perpetual banishment, eternal woe.

Those crimes are not the worst which outrage men;—
The most outrageous wound the King Supreme.
Yet e'en the worst are only ripened fruits,
Sprung from the same corrupted seed, which yields,
In all its branches, only fruits of sin.
Some fruits seem excellent in sight of men.
Oh, fair in seeming are the graces rare
Which well the human character adorn,
And when they spring from faith and love to God,
In truth are fair indeed, in sight of God.

But only power divine which gives new life
Can “unto holiness bring forth new fruits,”

And in the end give "everlasting life."
Think not that those who never truly live,
Not *choosing true life* here, can e'er be heirs
Of true and blessed life beyond the grave.
Nor think by deeds alone we live or die ;
Not *circumstance*, but *nature* fixes fate.
Those who receive a nature all divine
Shall dwell with God. None others see his face.

But some complain, "Why hast thou made us thus,
Involuntary heirs of earthly life,
If hereon hangs eternal life or woe?"

Unreasonable thought! though seeming wise,
The wisdom of th' Allwise to impugn.
What would'st thou have, to make the judgment
just ?

A choicee deereed to souls in embryo
"To be or not to be," with full foresight
Of all that life could bring of good or ill?
What more than embryo, our present state?

Or murmurest thou because 'tis ours to choose,—
This life the time to make the choice, for aye ?

O highly favored man! with reason blest
Above all earthly creatures, here, in this,
Behold thine opportunity sublime !
God gives eternal bliss to fallen man !
By birthright made at first an heir of life,
And, since that right was forfeited by sin,
Still made an heir through *voluntary choice* !

Dost thou complain thou wast not forced to be
A son or servant of the living God?
What virtue dwells in force? Or what true joy,
Were Heaven a prison of unwilling souls?
God seeks not slaves, or mere automatons
To sing his praises, or to do his will,
But those who find a rapture in his love.

Think'st thou 'tis false that those who such love
scorn,

Must miss the life found only in that love,
And also wake to loss of earthly joys,—
Bounties and mercies long bestowed in vain
On "evil and unthankful" enemies,
The "sunshine on the evil and the good,"
And "rain on just and unjust," sent from heaven?

Ah, woe to earth when these are long withheld,
And greater woe when souls are desolate,
With neither sun nor shower of heavenly grace,
Nor best affections e'en of worldly hearts;
When gentle love and charity are dead,
And hope, sweet hope, shall cheer man's heart no
more,

But dark malignant passions, unrestrained,
Shall fill the soul with bitterness and woe.

If men refuse the gentle reign of God
In all their hearts, and scorn his teachings wise,
Preferring Satan's subtleties and sin,
They have their choice The choice itself is death.
A heinous sin, it brings eternal death.

And first of all it seals the hopeless loss,
Within the soul itself, of all true life,
All principle of holiness, and good.
And like their chosen master, day by day,
They grow, insensibly, until at last
They show themselves fit children of their King.
God's word breathes not a single breath of hope
To those who scorn his offered mercy here.

Oh, dreadful world! where God's love dwelleth not,
And where his brooding Spirit cannot come.
His gentle pleadings there are heard no more;
No more are heard the offers of his grace;
Nor sweet and grateful praise from tuneful lips:
But blasphemies and curses fill the ear,
And ravings wild of wrath most impotent.

But some e'en now blaspheme God's blessed name
At every thought of such a woe as this,
With foul and shameful words of hate and scorn,
And spurn the faithful warnings of his word,
As empty imprecations, idle threats,
Proceeding from a dark malignant soul!

O, holy God! Can madness further go?
Foul slander reach more arrogant a height?
Shall human folly, desperate, hellish hate,
Presume to sit in judgment on our God?

Listen, O scorner of the word divine.
What more could God have done to save our race?
What greater love show creatures steeped in sin?
If all this fails, what yet remains to do?

God "willeth not the death of sinful men."
He would that all repent, believe, and live.

Yet certain teachers, some who love the Lord,
Confounded and distressed, in mind and heart,
By this profound and dreadful mystery,
Would fain defend the Word, by yielding up
Its obvious meaning, whispering still of hope,
Which God's word whispers not, to souls unsaved.
(Reason might favor such alternative,
Rather than blind unreasoning unbelief,
Which scorns sure faets for empty theories.)
But wiser 'tis to follow him who taught
"As never yet man taught," nor speculate,
When he bids *preach the word, and save the lost,*
They ask

"Why not annihilate the lost?"
No need have we to theorize. We know
That if 'twere best, and God could thus relieve
All needless suffering, so it would be done.

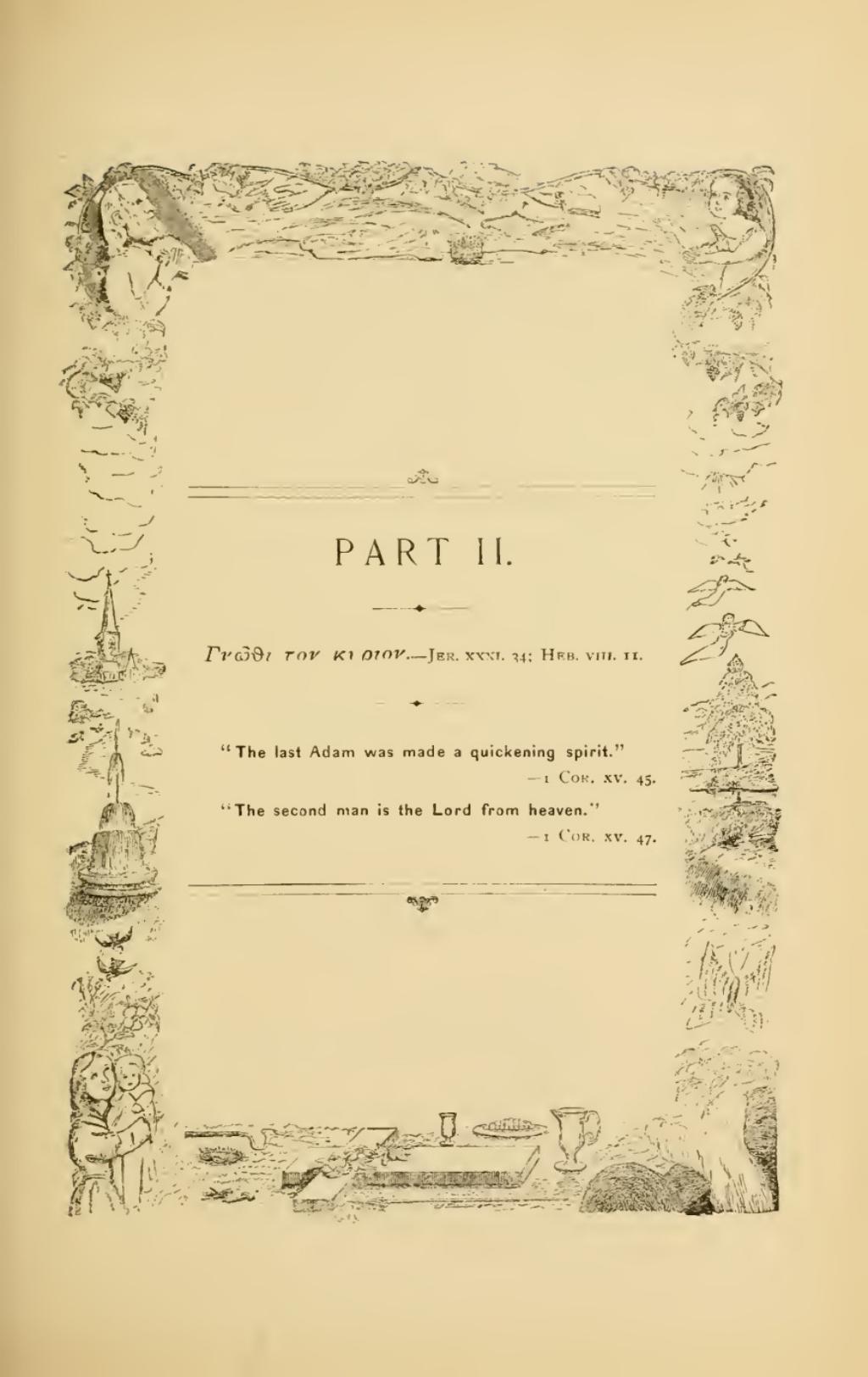
Degrees of penalties no doubt are fixed
"To every man according to his works,"
But unto him who "judgeth all the earth,
Who will do right," we leave the last award.

*Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed
may live. Deut. xxx. 19.*

L'ENVOI.

Apart from God, vain man, the child of earth,
Is earthy still, and stays his soul on earth,
And when this crumbling prop of earth decays,
His soul, though breathed of God, and made to rise
Towards God and heaven, defiled and burdened now
With deadly sin, if unredeemed, sinks down
In hopeless death, its true life forfeited.

*For in God's favor only there is life;
His loving kindness even more than life.*



PART II.

Γνῶθι τὸν κίονον.—JER. XXVI. 34; HEB. VIII. 11.

“The last Adam was made a quickening spirit.”

—1 COR. XV. 45.

“The second man is the Lord from heaven.”

—1 COR. XV. 47.

INVOCATION.

Spirit of Life, and Light Divine, in me,
The least of all thy servants, breathe,
Oh, breathe that heavenly breath of influence sweet,
Which, like the balmy breath of spring, that wakes
The cold, dead earth, to life and poesy,
Shall rouse my sluggish soul to life divine.

Of thee I long to sing. My highest wish,
This side of Heaven, is but to speak and live
For Thee,—to be Thy voice, myself, like Thee
Unseen, and all unknown by the great world
(Because it knew Him not who came to save).
“A voice,” whose “crying in the wilderness”
May reach poor souls wildered and lost therein,
And lead their erring feet to Thee again.

O source of truest life! teach me to speak
So wisely and so well of that true life,
Which lost immortals vainly strive to find
In mortal scenes, that some may lift their eyes
To see that life in Thee;—

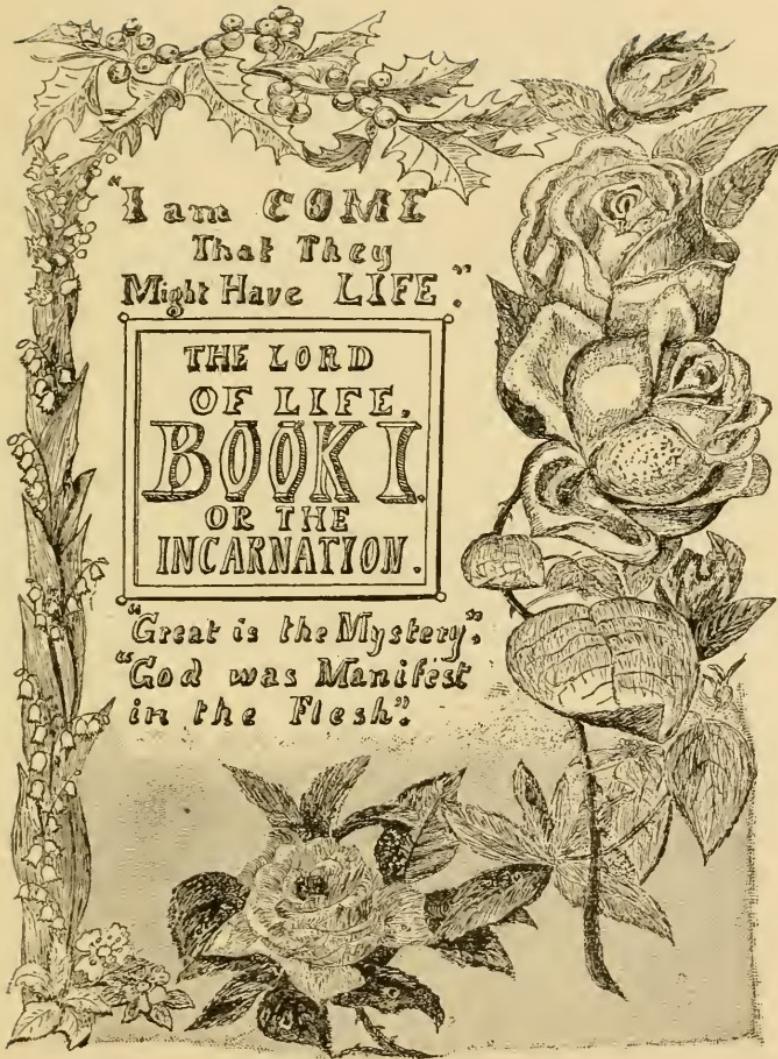
A life so full,
E'en in this narrow vale of death, so rich
In this poor tenement of clay, so bright
In this dark day of clouds, and mists, so pure
Where guilt and foul corruption reign, so sweet
Midst rancor, bitterness and gall, so true
Midst vanity and lies, so high, so grand

Amid the petty, low, and mean, so free
Where clank the chains of sin, so full of hope
Where fell despair would blot out Heaven itself;—
A life so holy, happy, and divine,
That unbelievers must themselves confess
Its truth and power, while those who seek thy grace
Receive thy life, and looking unto thee,
“Beholding, day by day, as in a glass,
The glory of the Lord, themselves are changed
Into the same bright image, passing on
From glory unto glory, even here,
As by the spirit of the Living God !”

"I am COME
That They
Might Have LIFE."

THE LORD
OF LIFE,
BOOK I.
OR THE
INCARNATION.

"Great is the Mystery".
"God was Manifest
in the Flesh".



PROEM.

Hark! The song of rapture, swelling
Loud from all the hosts above!
Oh, how sweetly, gladly telling
Boundless bliss, and speechless love!

Sweeter yet, more full of glory,
Wafted to our waiting ears,
Sounds that wondrous heavenly story
Echoing through this vale of tears.

“Peace on earth, good will from heaven!
Glory to the Lord on high!”
Pardon, life, and joy are given!
Live! ye souls, once doomed to die!

Hail thou mighty Lord ! descending,
Leaving Heaven’s all glorious throne!
Come, ye sons of men, attending,
Ruined souls, your Saviour own!

Ah! what means that cross uplifted?
Dies my sovereign there, for me?
Oh, may I, my God, thus gifted,
Live and die henceforth for thee!

BOOK ONE.

Urged through the depths of space by soulless force,
Obedient to a law it could not shun,
Of him whose sceptre is omnipotence,
Our little planet, like a shining point
Of starry dust, moved midst its sister worlds.
And wondering eyes looked out on every side,
And asked "how fares it with the sons of men?"

In harmony themselves with God's decrees,
The sons of God had shouted loud for joy,
And all the morning stars together sang,
When first they welcomed earth to join their host ;
And well they marked the seeming order kept
In all its annual course.

But angel lips,
Of those who flitted oft from star to star,
With swiftest wings, on messages of love,
Had whispered tremblingly the strange reports
Of man's apostacy from God !

Alas !

That c'en the least of all his wondrous works
Should scorn his rule, when freely left to choose.
And those who heard the dark and dreadful tale,
That sin and death reigned in a world so fair,
Looked forth with fear, expecting soon to see
That bright but guilty world, which so belied
Its beauty and the order of its course,
Blotted at once from out the height of heaven,

Or, like a wandering star, consigned to depths
Of everlasting darkness and despair.

It seemed e'en now, to pure angelic eyes,
A loathsome plague-spot on the face of heaven.

But Oh, the depths of God's amazing love!
Though scorned and hated by the sons of men,
And even slandered for the righteous doom
Which laws unchangeable had e'er decreed
On every soul that wrought unrighteousness,
“Not willing,” (so his holy word declares,)
“That any souls should perish” in their sins,
He sought to win them back from death and hell.

Oh, that our minds might rise with reverence deep
To loftiest heights of rapt adoring thought,
To view that wondrous scene in Heaven's high courts,
E'er the foundations of the Earth were laid,
When God the Father covenant made with him,
Who by himself should save a guilty world!
This may not be. But let us view the scene,
When first to wondering worlds which saw man's
fall,
God's plan of mercy was at last announced.

Yet how transcend the bounds of time and space?
Science may furnish but a few dim hints,
And Faith itself can mere suggestions give,
But intuitions of the truth sublime
'Tis ours to gain by hearing wisdom's voice,
“By watching daily at her saered gates,
And waiting patient at her door posts long,”

In holy contemplation of her words.

Seek we the light through God's own holy book,
And through his vast material universe.
His Spirit's pure illuminating fire,
That guides us into all essential truth,
Shall save from serious error as we rise.

Behold the starry hosts around us glow
With holy light and mystic life from God,
Pointing above all sublunary things
To God their great Creator, and their end.

Lo! as we gaze upon their bright array,
The Earth itself escapes and vanishes.
Yon galaxy, that stretched so pale and dim
Across our skies, now glows with stronger light.
See! It dissolves! Innumerable worlds
Appear distinct, and nearer, nearer draw.
'Tis we ourselves are gifted with a power
Unknown before. Our wondering eyes behold
The glorious hosts of God, through all his realms.
E'en to creation's utmost verge they range.
And stars, unseen before by mortal eyes
Through mightiest instruments, appear in light.
Our souls are lost! Our senses stupefied!
O'erwhelmed, we wonder at the amazing sight!

But power divine upholds us, and restores
Our fainting strength, and greater wonders yet
God shows, in glimpses clear, as we have strength
To bear the wondrous sight; for lo! yon orbs
Swell into worlds, whose strange inhabitants

Are visible through all their vast extent!
Oh, strange indeed to human eyes they seem,
Yet blest and beautiful beyond all thought
Of mortal man, beyond his power to guess.

Assembled now they look from mountain heights,
From valleys, and from plains, a multitude!—
Yea, countless multitudes look forth to view
The Lord of Hosts upon his glorious throne!

Ah! This, not, yet, may we. No sinful eyes
May e'er behold his glorious majesty!
The beatific vision yet awaits
Our happy souls, when free from sinful flesh !

But yon unfallen worlds the privilege
E'en now enjoy, with rapturous delight.
And in each beaming countenance we see
Reflected glories, as on Moses' face.

In rainbow hues arrayed, some dazzling hosts
Excite our wonder. Others shine in light
Fair as the moon, when, seen on wintry night,
Sharp outlined 'gainst the dark blue vault of heaven,

She swiftly rides, the glorious queen of night.
And others still (oh, most amazing sight!)
Flash into view, with splendor like the sun,
On wings of power, like planets in themselves!
These are the glorious seraphim of God,
“The Principalities, and Powers,” of Heaven!

A hush of expectation rests on all.
Now hark! What breaks the stillness of the spheres?
Entrancing sounds of heavenly melody
From happy seraphs dwelling near the throne,
Steal through the vast expanse of listening worlds.
But oh, the loud response that now ascends
The chorus of glad voices swelling forth,
A multitudinous, a thrilling sound,
Louder than ocean's waves on all her coasts,
Louder than thousand thunders blent in one,
And yet in harmony sublime and sweet!
The inspiration and the sentiment
Is “praise to God, who doeth all things well!”

The song is hushed, and Gabriel now stands forth,
The great archangel sent to watch o'er Earth,
And sad proclaims *the guilty fall of man!*

A solemn silence settles on the host,
An awful stillness as of death itself,
And grief and fear descend on every heart.
One word might tell the thought of every soul,
“Lost!” “Lost!” Alas! the world is “lost!”

But from the throne itself goes forth a voice,
“Tis yet our will to seek and save the lost.
‘Whom shall we send? and who for us will go?’ ”

The mightiest angels listen, all amazed!
Who can redeem the fallen sons of men?
And silence reigns o'er all the heavenly host.

Yet such the love which angels bear to God
That soon from every side responses come.

“‘Here, Lord, am I,’ to do thy will, ‘send me.’”

Ah, what can angels do to purge the guilt
That clings to human nature, and must be
By human nature answered and atoned?
The mighty problem fills each anxious heart.

But lo! Oh, wonder! From the throne itself
Stands forth the messenger of love divine!

“Only begotten and beloved Son,”
Who “dwelleth in the Father’s bosom,” aye,
“The brightness of his glory,” evermore,
“The very image of his person,” He
“Upholding all things by his powerful word,”
Though “counting it no robbery” to remain
As “equal with the Lord,” yet condescends
To take the mighty task of saving men!

And thus he speaks,

“My Father, lo ! I come,
In yon blest volume of thy holy book
’Tis writ of me (Our lasting covenant made
E’er time began), ‘To do thy holy will
Is my delight.’ I take the sinner’s place,
I bear the dreadful load of sin and shame.”

Astonished silence reigns again in Heaven,
A solemn wonder o’er those countless hosts,
While grief and fear fill many a loyal heart.
Yet tenderest love, and admiration new,
And holy joy, triumphant rise at last.

New depths of glory in the heart divine
Are now revealed to Heaven's delighted eyes.
And unto sinful Earth 'tis given to see
A glory yet unseen before in Heaven,
Divine compassion, and forgiving love,
Stooping to ransom creatures lost in sin,—
A "glory full of grace and truth," of one,
"Only begotten well beloved Son"
Of him who sits on Heaven's eternal throne
This glory shines in spiritual realms,
By beasts and beastly natures all unseen,
But visible to pure anointed eyes
Of lovers of the truth, by truth made free.

* * * * *

Long ages roll, counted in earthly years,
E'er Heaven's decree was on the Earth fulfilled;
But "when the fulness of the time was come,"
The "Lord sent forth his Son," of woman born,
And subject made to law, that He might learn
Obedience for man's sake, who disobeyed.

Awake, and greet the day, O Earth,
The illustrious morn,
So honored by the Saviour's birth !
Awake, O joy, and holy mirth,
For Christ is born !

O gladness, fill each loving soul !
Ring out your glee !
And let the happy echoes roll,
From East to West, from Pole to Pole,
From sea to sea.

Ye angels, with the earth rejoice,
In realms of light !
Behold your Sovereign's gracious choice !
Praise him with harps, with heart, and voice,
With pure delight !

Ah, how can Earth, unconscious, still sleep on,
Wrapped in her dreams of earthly good or ill,
When God himself attends her low estate,
And Heaven rejoices for the Earth's great joy ?
Far different now the lot of man on Earth,
From that in Paradise, when God was near.
Sweet innocence was his, and deep delight
In God, and all things beautiful and good.
But now from each extreme of human life
Come signs of sin and sorrow, gloom and doubt.
On Rome's imperial hills proud Cæsar sways
The destinies of empires ruled by force.
Ineरnate selfishness sits there enthroned.
On Judah's throne reign cruelty and lust.
And splendid misery presides o'er all.
From temples and from academic groves
Blows "every wind of doctrine," foul or fair,
Of false religions, false philosophies ;
And e'en from Zion's sacred hill there breathes
The odor of decay ; for Pharisees,
And priests, and scribes, like "whited sepulchres,"
Preserve dead forms, not true religious life.
Men drift in vain on restless seas of doubt,
Foundering in superstition's dismal depths,
Or wrecked on rocks of total unbelief!

For hopeless “darkness covers all the earth,
Gross darkness all the people.”

‘Wake, O Earth !

For unto you that sit in hopeless gloom,
“The region and the shadow deep of death,
Light shall arise !” Behold, e'en now it dawns !
And hark !

From Bethlehem's plains the thrilling sound
Of sweet angelie voiees hail the day !
Oh, list the song, borne on the breeze of night !

“Glory to God !” sounds all abroad,
“Glory to God on high !”
“Glory to God !” “glory to God !”
The echoes oft reply.

Yet hark ! O Earth ! Oh, list again,
That happy, heavenly strain !
“Good will to men ! Good will to men !”
The loud and sweet refrain.

And “peace on Earth !” “Sweet peace on Earth !”
Oh, may it never cease.
All hail our mighty Sovereign's birth,
The glorious “Prince of Peace !”

Let Earth prolong that happy song,
And may it echoing roll,
Succeeding centuries along,
To glad each sorrowing soul.

The humble shepherds, near their sleeping flocks,
With wonder hear the rapturous joy of Heaven,

And see the glory of the dazzling hosts.
A little moment, night gives place to day,
Or mystic splendor, neither day nor night—
No day nor night like this, while time endures.
But, like the sheep, the unconscious world sleeps on.
Save at the little inn at Bethlehem,
Where humble hearts, in unison with Heaven,
With holy rapture, with exceeding joy,
Welcome the advent of the Son of God,
Revealed in flesh as also Son of man.

Oh, mystery above all mysteries !
The union, real and true, of God and man !
“To us a child is born, a son is given ;
The empire of the world on him is laid :
His glorious name is called the Wonderful,
The Counsellor, the Great and Mighty God,
The Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace !”

Rejoice, ye sons of men ! rejoice with her,
In whom this sweetest mystery of earth,
Of bringing in a precious soul to life,
Is now fulfilled in bringing in the Christ.
Not introduceing sin, like mother Eve,
Or giving birth to Cain, the murderer,
Thou usherest in the very “Lamb of God,”
Ordained to take away the sins of men,
And make us victors over death and hell.

O Mary ! sweetest name of womankind,
Henceforth, among all nations, “blessed” called,

A truly blessed mother, dignified
As "Mother" by the very Son of God,
And crowned as queen of countless human hearts,
How doth thy soul exult in Christ thy Lord!

With deepest reverence, tenderest, happiest love,
She treasures in her arms this wondrous gift,
The "gift unspeakable," of love divine!
The gift of gifts, to her and all mankind!
Oh, words were weak, and liveliest thought were
lame,
And human art were impotent to catch,
And show to men the raptures of her soul
E'en Raphael could only dimly hint
The wondrous grace of such a mother love.

Hasten, ye shepherds! Hasten to the fold!
Behold, with us, the sweet, the amazing sight,
The Prince of Earth and Heaven, so lowly laid,
Amidst the sheep and oxen of the stall,
Within a manger for his cradle bed.

The happy mother, resting near his side,
Thoughtless of self, doth watch, with mind intent
As guardian angel, o'er her sleeping child.
O sight of beauty to discerning eyes!
The splendors vain of outward pomp and show,
Of rich apparel, costly gems, and art,
That minister to selfishness and pride,
Yield but a transient pleasure to the eye,
Passing and fading like the evening clouds.
Thy beauty, gentle mother, like a star,

Needs naught of earthly art, or praise, or blame,
But shines aloft, with gentle ray serene,
Far up beyond the dimming clouds of time,
And dwelleth in the memory of men.

Rude thy surroundings, plain thy humble garb,
Yet, like the water-lily, which enfolds,
Within its snowy breast, a heart of gold,
Unfolding all its wealth from depths of ooze
Repugnant to the natural sense of men,
Yet gracing all, with loveliness most rare,
So thou, upon thy chaste and spotless breast,
Enfoldest him, who is the heart of hearts !
From depths of poverty thou makest rich .
The world itself, and sheddest grace on things,
Which, once despised, behold ! are glorified !
And consecrated ! in the hearts of men !
Thou borrowest not thy fame from earthly things,
But, like the moon, which beauty sheds o'er all,
Reflectest light sent from the sun himself.

O Mary! dear to thoughtful loving hearts,
Because so dear to him who loved us all,
We hail thee ! type of all true motherhood !
We think of one translated from the earth
To whom we owe our life and life's best gifts.

(O Mother ! Feebly can we tell thy worth,
Or speak the love our fond hearts owe to thee.
From thee we gain our holiest thoughts of God,
And illustrations of his care divine,
The knowledge sweet of tenderness and love,

And gentle ministry, unselfish, pure,
Patient, and vigilant, unwearying, kind,
A readiness to sacrifice thyself
To bless thy children, and to guide them on
Towards God and Heaven by leading in the way.)

But thou, O Mary, mayest teach the world
How life is noblest, not in being served,
But serving him who came to serve us all.
Most highly favored of all women thou !
Most blest thy privilege to nourish him
Who came to draw us all unto himself.
He came, 'tis true, to minister to us,
“ Not to be ministered unto ” himself.
But 'tis thine honor and thy joy, for him
To fill those offices of tenderest love,
And gentlest ministry for his dear sake,
Which make true mothers blest.

How blessed thou !

But who can tell the thoughts of that fair child ?
Or how the God-head manifest in him
Could dwell with weakness, ignorance and grief,
Or how or when 'twas first revealed to him ?

We only reason, since his human soul
Increased in wisdom, as his human form
Increased in stature, both in favor too
With God and man, there also dawned and grew
A consciousness of his relationship,
The son of man, as truly Son of God,
The mystery sublime of God within.

Ere this his parents knew from angel lips,
His name "Emmanuel," whose meaning deep
A slow faith loses, unbelief evades.
What reverence filled their hearts! what thoughts
 sublime

Of holy joy and gratitude and love!
To natural tenderness, which even beasts
Feel for their young, was added in their hearts,
A sacred sense of new relationship
To God himself, a nearness never known
By human hearts ere this, though Enoch walked
In union close with God, and Moses stood
Upon the flaming mount, and heard His voice.

Ah, sweeter, dearer, tenderer than theirs
The holy rapture of their humble souls,
Who press to throbbing hearts, in fond embrace,
With love unspeakable, their precious child,
Who also was the "well beloved Son"
Of God Himself!

Ah, now they saw such depths
Of God's amazing love herein revealed,
That all the former visions of the Lord
Seemed only glimpses, distant, faint and dim,
As one might see a prince or hero pass,
In chariot of state, through crowded streets.
For them, the king forsook his royal pomp,
Came down, and gave himself as all their own!
Yet showed his deity in other forms.
They saw no dazzling splendor, heard no sound
Of awful majesty, or whelming power:

These could not show the gentleness and grace
That more adorned the glorious King of Heaven;
But infant feebleness, and childish pain,
The narrowness and want, of poverty,
Displayed a condescension so profound
That Heaven beheld amazed, and men of Earth
Could scarce believe, could never comprehend;
A condescension only possible
To God himself,—as glorious as his power,
Yea, more! Far more! For Satan too has power,
But this is glory true, that “God is love.”
Oh, that we all might thus lay hold on God,
And, with the tenderness of truest love,
Might hold him to our hearts!

But is’t not ours?

Was’t not for this God sent his only Son
Thus to reveal his love, and win our hearts?
Our love He thus entreats, “Abide in Me,
And I in you,” as branches in the vine.
But oh, that we might clasp him in our arms,
And offer some sweet ministry of love,
A love unspeakable by word or deed,
As Mary loved and ministered of yore!
Such is our fond desire.

But is’t not given

To love and minister in other forms?
“For inasmuch as unto one of these,
The very least, Ye do such things,” said God,
“Ye do them unto me!”

It was indeed

A crowning blessing unto Mary given,
Beyond all others of the race of man,
Or e'en of "principalities and powers
In heavenly worlds," to do such acts of love
As only mothers may;

But is it thine,
Fair sister to embrace a child? thine own?
Behold an emblem of the sacred trust
To Mary given, a sacred trust to thee,
A gem more precious than the Koh-i-noor,
Famed "Mount of light!" and for a worthier crown,
To glisten in the coronet of Heaven!
Guard well thy trust. 'Tis not to idolize,
Or claim for self, the treasure lent for Heaven,
E'en less to use it as an idle toy,
Or fit for Earth's ambitions, hopes or fears;
But keep and polish for the King of Heaven.
Behold thine opportunity sublime!
To train a soul immortal and divine,
As one of God's own children, for his courts,
And almost mould it to the image sweet
Of His dear Son, by sweetness like His own

The days roll on, the uneventful days
That usher in those years, three wondrous years,
So full of love, and grace and power divine,
So full of light and unquenchable hope for man.
Only the tragedy at Bethlehem
Displayed man's folly, cruelty and guilt,
That blindly sought to thwart the will of Heaven.

The cruel stroke was shunned for him it sought
By timely flight to Egypt's sheltering care.

There Moses too, a type of Christ to come,
Unconscious lay in infant slumbers sweet,
Encompassed all around by dreadful foes.
Less dread ye hideous monsters of the Nile,
Than human monsters snuffing infants' blood.
But mightier far the loving care of Heaven,
Surrounding closer still that little ark,
And e'en more tender, and more vigilant,
Than mother's love or sister's sleepless watch.

From Egypt, soon the Lord recalled his Son,
And unto Nazareth, nestling in the hills,
A blest retreat, the holy family came.
Ah, sweet the years spent in this quiet home,
For nature spread her choicest beauties there,
And blessed peace and love their fragrance shed
O'er all those sacred precincts, sweeter far
Than all the breath of "Araby the blest."

Fair Nazareth! how sweet thy soft repose!
Far from the noise of worldly care and strife,
(Secluded e'en from curious traveler's search,
Who journeys only on the world's highway,) Reached through a cleft of rocks by friendly feet,
And guarded by the all-embracing hills,
Thou shieldest well the childhood of our Lord.
His infant slumbers and his boyish glee
Breathe undisturbed in thy sweet sheltering arms.
Thou art forgotten by the world,—unknown,

And e'en despised. The scornful questioner asks
"Can any good thing come from Nazareth?"
But thou rejoicest in thine own great good,
And heaven itself smiles lovingly on thee.
The dreamy stillness of a summer's day,
Unbroken, save by song of birds, or hum
Of droning insects, or the merry ring
Of childish laughter pealing forth anon,
Or by the shepherd's or vine-dresser's voice,
Bespeaks the heavenly peace that dwells in thee.
Softly the sunlight sleeps upon thy fields,
Where ripening harvests, waving in the breeze,
Await the reaper's sickle. On the hills
The shifting shadows of the summer clouds
Move like the guardian spirits of the place,
And lend their beauty. In the vale below
We view fair gardens, rich with fruits and flowers,
And guarded each by brilliant cactus hedge,
And road sides verdant with the springing grass,
And oft umbrageous with the fairest trees,
The olive, orange, oleander fair,
Pomegranate, almond, citron, and the fig,
And wealth of clustering vines, while here and
there
A white stone cottage shines amidst the green.
And yonder at the fountain, flowing free,
Women and children in their gay attire,
Give life and gladness to the whole fair scene.
The grace and beauty of those mountain maids
Are praised by trav'lers with united voice.

Here grew, in innocence, the holy child.
What pure, what deep delights entrance those hearts,
Whose most exalted privilege it was
To have their Lord abide, as all their own.

How sweet the music of a childish voice,
Its echoes thrilling in parental hearts!
But far beyond all sweetness was his voice,
Who, to the innocence of childhood dear,
Joined holy harmlessness, and heavenly grace.
His voice attuned to speak the praise of God!
'Tis sweet to watch a child's unfolding mind;
But oh, how wonderful to hear the words,
From childish lips, of wisdom all divine!

One incident alone in holy writ
Reveals the boyhood of our honored Lord,
But this speaks volumes to the thoughtful mind.
Already he had found his Father God!
His human spirit knew the truth sublime,
That mystery of mysteries, which none
But he himself could fully comprehend,
That God in him was "manifest in flesh."
Oh, wondrous thought for any human soul!
And wondrous too, that even we may call
The Lord our father, as adopted sons.
This thought should guide us as it guided him.
It led him to the temple of his God,
And there, with venerable men, and learned,
Absorbed with questions sacred and profound,
Though but a boy he passed the fleeting day,

Nor marked its flight, while they, with wonder heard
Questions and answers from a mind so young.
New light beamed forth upon the sacred word.
They felt themselves, though teachers, taught by him,
And some discerned a “teacher sent from God.”

His parents find, when on their homeward way,
That they have lost him from their company,
And seek him earnestly, with sorrowing hearts.

The journey of a day, so lightly made,
They anxiously retrace, and when the night
Has settled on the streets, so lone and dark,
The cry goes forth and startles many a heart,
“Ye daughters of Jerusalem, give ear!
Oh, tell me where is he my soul doth love?”

From many a lattice, curious eyes look forth,
Surprised to see such beauty and such grief.
Then asks kind pity,

“O thou fairest one
Among all women, why such depths of woe,
And ‘what is thy beloved more than’ all
The loved ones of the Earth?”

“My love is one
Chiefest among ten thousand, fairer far
Than all the sons of Earth, or Heaven itself,
‘Yea, altogether lovely!’ heart and soul
Of gentleness and truth, and comely form,
‘Sweeter and fairer than the sons of men.’
‘O tell me, sister, where my love doth hide?’”

But vain the question! empty the reply!

And watchmen rude, with smiting rods, urge on
The sore wayfarers, through the deepening gloom.

Slow wears the weary night, and one day more
They search the city through, with growing pain.
Three gloomy anxious days they press the search,
Burdened with grief! all other cares forgot!

Find we no lesson here? Or dost thou say
They sought a son, and less they could not do?
Ah, yes! They sought a son. But what of thee
Kind reader?

Seekest thou a Hidden One?

Hast thou through three distressing days, or years,
Pursued the search for one to thee as dear,
Yea, dearer than a son, thy Saviour, God?
Oh, "seek the Lord now while He may be found."
So all who know Him as their loving Lord,
Their heart's best love, will, sorrowing, seek him,
lost!

Alas for those who, having never known,
Forever lose, unconscious of their loss!

But now at last, which should have been the first,
The seekers reach the very Temple's courts.
There should we seek our Lord! where He appoints.

Amazed they find Him, with the doctors there!
The sorrowing mother clasps her son with joy,
Yet chidingly she asks, "Why, O my son,
Hast thou thus dealt with us? we sought thee long,
With sorrowing hearts, thy father and myself."

“How is it that ye sought me?

Wist ye not,

About my Father’s business I must be ?”

Love, duty, honor, all so due to you

I gladly yield. My heavenly Father’s claims

Are still supreme. And in His holy courts

Ye might have found me, where ye should have
sought.”

This earliest utterance of the holy child

May teach us all a lesson for our lives.

Not ripest age, nor most extensive lore

Of all philosophers yields richer truth,

Or gives a precept, for our daily lives,

More plain, more practical, or more profound.

“About my Father’s business,” O my soul,

Be this, through life, my first, my last concern !

Not ours to theorize, but learn from God

His holy will. This wisdom is divine.

“About my Father’s business,” also mine

What business can be mine, that is not His?

Whate’er of duty falls to me to do

Is duty only since He so appoints,—

Not my own schemes, but His allotted tasks,—

Tasks, if my soul reluctant does His will,

Still seeking first her own.—But, seeking His,

Duty is also privilege and joy.

“About my Father’s business!” May it be

My joy and blest employment, day by day !

If, soon, in other worlds, 'twill rapture be
To do His holy will, and sing His praise,
Should it be deemed, e'en here, an irksome task?
Nay, even now 'tis highest privilege,
And purest joy, for those who know the Lord ;
And here brief opportunity is given
Service to yield impossible in Heaven.

The fabled Sybil half her tomes destroyed,
Book after book, yet asked the same high price,
For those remaining, first refused for all :
So, year by year is blotted from our lives,
Yet for the last, God makes the same high claim,
As for the whole; 'tis that we yield ourselves,
Without reserve, to do his holy will !

The loss, the irreparable loss is ours,
If we His offers finally refuse.
And still 'tis loss, irreparable loss,
If e'en our earliest years are cast away.
To each of sev'n brief ages passed by man,
Infaney, boyhood, adolescencie, youth,
The prime, the fall, and winter, of our life,
God has assigned a secret all its own.
“The secret” is to those that “fear the Lord.”
Seorned and withdrawn it is forever lost !

“My Father’s business!” what authority
Could bind me with a stronger bond than His ?
Or what more sacred, more endearing tie?
What business more important for my soul ?
‘Tis not His benefit, but mine He seeks.
He wills my highest good. My vain desires

Reach after hurtful things, as infant hands
Would grasp the pretty flame. His watchful care
Restrains the effort, and forbids the wish,
And teaches, oft, with wise and patient love,
By precept and example, what is best.

The earliest business of the opening mind
Is first to learn His will. 'Tis plainly writ
In the blest volume of His holy word.

The open page of nature shows His praise,
His wisdom, goodness, and almighty power,
"The heavens declare the glory of the Lord,
The firmament displays His handiwork:"
But only in His written word we read
The glory, grace, and love of God to man.

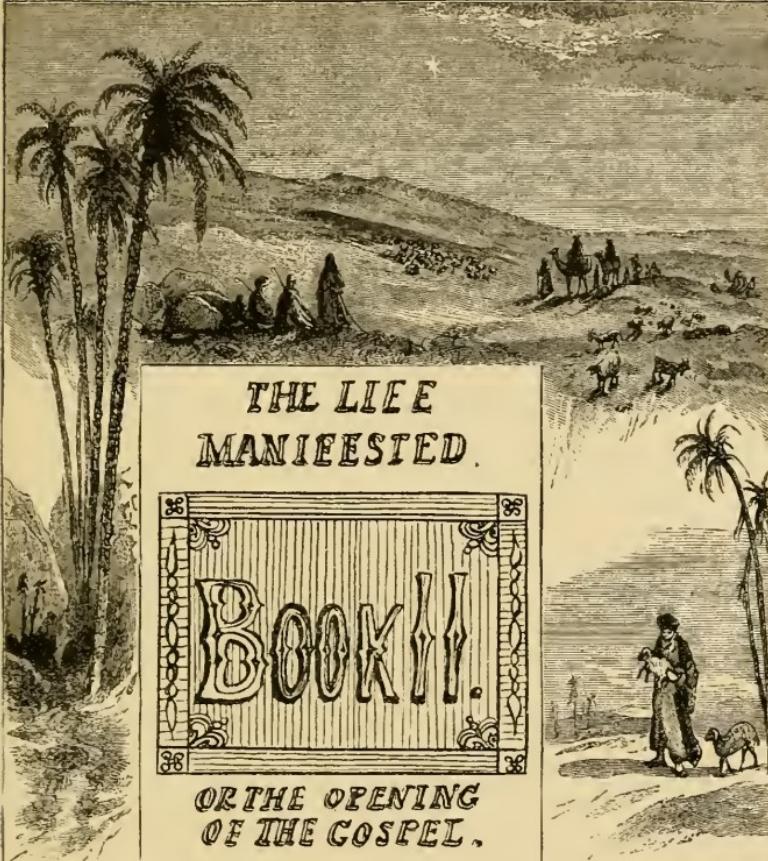
And there we find his will, the business taught,
Which He has deemed man's duty, interest, joy,
Enriching all our souls in earth and heaven,
Expanding, filling, cleansing, lifting up,
And molding to the image of the Lord.

"About my Father's business." These four words
Tell the whole story of Christ's youthful years.
Our curious minds would gladly learn far more
Of incident, and speech and mighty deed,
But this, at least, may show His daily life.

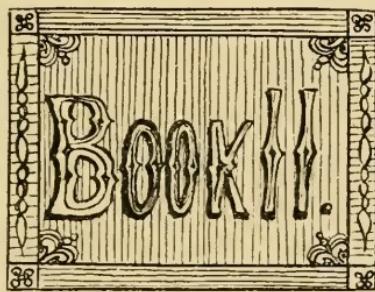
The highest mission of His wondrous life
Was still the same, through all its cares and toils,
E'en to the end, "to do His Father's will,"
Yet on those days of childhood and of youth
Our fancy lingers still, and in that home,

The second Eden of our fallen world,
Would fondly dwell ; for peace and purity,
And heavenly love, and joy were dwellers there,
And 'tis a comfort to our souls to think
That here, at least, “The man of sorrows” found
A pure delight, and gathered strength to bear
The grievous burdens of His later life.
Still do we know and feel those latest years,
Though filled with sorrows, griefs, and toils, and
cares,
Were richer, broader, grander, more sublime,
More precious in the sight of God and man.

He that hath the Son hath life. 1 John v. 12.



THE LIFE MANIFESTED.



OR THE OPENING
OF THE GOSPEL.



"For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal Life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."

1st John 1,2.

PROEM.

O Father! whose glory illuminates heaven
 Beyond our conception, ineffably bright,
A view of that glory thy mercy hath given,
 Revealed, and yet veiled, to suit man's feeble sight.

Thy glory reflected on nature's bright pages,
 The earth and the firmament daily declare,
Which show, to the vision of children and sages,
 Thy wisdom, and power, and bounteous care.

Far greater the glory of Christ pure and holy,
 Redeeming lost sinners from ruin and sin,
Though outwardly humble, plebeian and lowly,
 All glorious, lovely, and kingly within.

In Him we see God manifested in beauty,
 Disrobed of His bright unendurable light,
We see the true glory of faith, love and duty,
 And view Him our Saviour with love and delight.

BOOK SECOND.

Hast thou, dear reader, ever, through the night,
Watched the unfolding of the Cereus fair ?
Long months had passed in preparation slow,
While patient nature sought her destined end ;
But "when the fulness of the time was come,"
Just at the moment fixed, the midnight hour,
A vision strange appeared, enrobed in white—
No ghostly vision, voiceless though it be,
But tangible, and yet so delicate,
So wondrous fair, it seemed too frail to touch,
E'en as the snow flake crystals, fine and white,
A living presence, so removed from all
The common round of ordinary life,
It seemed some visitor from other spheres,
With some deep message from the power divine.
A few brief hours it lingered, then was gone !

So blossomed out the life of Christ at last,
If fair His infancy, oh, fairer far,
Beyond the power of poor weak hearts to tell,
The full unfolding of that life sublime.
And yet 'twas in the midnight of that life,—
Not in the lovely dawn of infancy,
Nor in the sunshine of His riper years,
But when the shadows deep of human guilt
Began to gather round His sinless head,
When black ingratitude, and scorn, and hate,

Cast gloom upon his tender loving heart—
“A man of sorrows, and acquainted well
With grief,” He showed the glory of His soul.
O matchless beauty! pure and undefiled,
Of perfect symmetry, most delicate,
And sweeter than the fairest flower that blows!
O fairest one among the sons of men!
Thy soul is formed for love! pure, holy love!
Thrice happy heart that claims thee for its own!
“O my beloved, thou art truly mine!
And I am wholly thine!”

Ye who have known
The pure and deep delight of wedded souls,
Wedded in truth, and not in name or form—
Thon who hast looked, with deepest, purest joy,
Into the eyes, that, while they read thy soul,
Revealed in their own depths, so pure and bright
A sanctuary sweet, enshrining thee—
Ye who have felt the soul enrapturing power
Of mutual love, like ocean’s mighty tide
Without a cheek, resistless, deep and pure,
But all unnoticed by the busy world—
Ye may conceive the bliss of that pure love,
When Christ, “the well beloved Son of God,”
Reveals Himself the spouse of His redeemed,
“The Holy, Harmless, Undefiled,” and crowned
With every grace that beautifies the soul.
Thus blossomed out the love of God to man,
And also, loveliness of character,
To win all hearts once purified from sin.

Not unproved innocence alone was his,
But grace, triumphant o'er severest tests ;
Nor gentleuess and tenderness most sweet,
But manly strength to meet the mightiest foes :
Not merely charity for erring souls,
But justice stern, rebuking high born guilt ;
Nor yearning love for mortals lost in sin,
But faithful truth, that warned of future woe ;
Nor dove-like harmlessness that injures none,
But holy zeal that sacrilege could scourge ;
Nor condescension even to the least,
But dignity that held the proud in awe ;
Nor sweet simplicity that knew no guile,
But wisdom most profound, that knew all men ;
Not knowledge only, to instruct the mind,
But sense most practical to guide the life ;
Nor righteousness that yields to men their dues,
But purity of heart and holiness,
That gives the love supremely due to God.

When, oh my friends, " did e'er such graces meet ?"
In any single character 'mong men ?
Can history such excellency display ?
Or show such perfect balancee of the whole ?
Poor mediocrity may show no vice,
But shining merits have their shadows too,
And virtues oft are balanced ill by vice,
Or sometimes fulness, by most painful void.
Thus Socrates himself, whose virtues rare
(Though groping in the dark for light divine)
Endeared him even to the sons of God,

Confessed by arguments, as well as life,
His painful distance from the one Supreme,
Whom dimly he discerned. Alas! how far
All speculative thought must ever fall
(E'en as an arrow speeded towards the sun)
Below the sure and heavenward flight of him,
Who, like an eagle, soars till lost to sight,—
Nay! like an angel mounts to God himself!
Not like a stranger he addressed his God,
He sent no cock to Esculapius,
But as a son, with father near and dear,
Held high communion, intimate and sweet.

And so He spake with all authority,
As one who knew His great commission well.
No weak and painful questionings were his,
No doubt e'er dimmed the clearness of His views.
Not like the scribes and Pharisees He strove
To weave the shreds of truth to fit some creed.
He came, the very "Word of God" Himself,
And said "I am the Way, the Truth, the Life!"

Our Lord was "glorious in *his holiness.*"
'Twas this distinguished him above all men,
Philosophers, philanthropists or saints.
An excellence unprized by men of earth,
But far more precious, in the sight of God,
Than aught of good achievable by man.
'Twas not the holiness of outward forms,
Of rites or sanctimonious ways, or rules
Of harsh asceticism, cynic scorn

Of human joys, or isolation stern
From social life (mere selfishness disguised).
'Twas perfect purity of heart and life,
With faith and love supremely due to God,
And constant study of His holy will,
Not as an irksome task, but truest joy,
His life's great work, who utters

“ Lo ! I come.

I'the volume of the book 'tis writ of me,
For I delight to do thy will O God.”

'Twas also truest, kindest love to men,
And gentle charity for human faults,
And genial sympathy with joy and grief,
Or at the wedding feast, or at the tomb.

His holiness essential goodness breathed,
A goodness sprung from no mere human source,—
Else had it been a common thing with men—
'Twas truly said “ there is none good but one,
And that is God;” yet Christ himself was good,
And not with mere humanity to man,
But with the tenderest love for fallen souls,
And love to God, spring of His holiness,
A glorious holiness, whose perfect robe
Enwrapped him as a halo all divine.

Yet this was glory unperceived by men
Of thoughtless, worldly, low and sinful minds.
Such could not see the king in His disguise.
The world, tho' “ made by Him,” discerned Him
not.

He sought His own, "His own received Him not." But unto those whose faith and love perceived His character divine, and saw in Him The beauty of true holiness revealed, And so received Him as their Lord divine, Striving to be like Him, "He gave the power That they should also be the Sons of God."

Humbly, yet not unheralded, our Lord Entered upon the labor of His life; Not with the heralding of trumpet loud, With pompous pageant blaring through the streets, Or bannered hosts, arrayed for dreadful war, With burnished weapons glittering in the sun. (Such pomp may daze the thoughtless multitude, But truer glory meets discerning eyes.) His heralding was but a lonely voice, Crying to strangers in the wilderness.

"Prepare God's way! Make straight His paths! Make, in your hearts, a highway for our God!"

To Him great crowds go forth, from every side, By various motives led, by true faith some, Others by idle curiosity, But most inspired by vague, yet striving hopes Of wondrous things to come, things oft foretold By seers and kings in ages most remote, And now determined by the prophecy Of Daniel's weeks and days, as come at last! Momentous era in the course of time! The universal expectation looked

To hail a king of wondrous warlike power,
To break the yoke of bondage from His friends,
Subduing mighty foes, dethroning kings,
And ruling nations with an iron rod.

Subdued excitement fills each longing heart,
A smothered flame, that only needs a fan
To kindle conflagration through the land.
With small compunction now men leave their homes,
As if their country summoned them to arms.
The wheels of worldly life stand still awhile:
The farmer in the furrow leaves his plow,
The busy wife forgets her usual cares,
The chaff'ring merchant leaves the noisy mart,
The student drops his books, the scribe his pen,
Cities are changed to silent solitudes;
The desert waste resounds with eager life.

But wonder at the rough clad prophet's words
Fills every heart. He does not spare their sins.
To judgment, not to victory they come,
And penitence, not triumph fills their souls.
Pierced to the quick by conscious guilt they stand.
With grief confess, and from the prophet seek
Baptism for remission of their sins.
And now in mute expectancy they wait
And listen to the prophet, saying

“I

Baptize indeed with water, but the Lord
Who followeth me, the latchet of whose shoes
I know myself unworthy to unloose,

Cometh with fire, and with the Holy Ghost,
Whose fan is in his hand, most thoroughly
To purge His floor, and gather in the wheat,
But burn the chaff with fire unquenchable !”

These solemn words they treasure in their hearts,
With musings deep of what the prophet means.

When lo ! a manly stranger draweth near,
Arrayed in simple garb, a seamless robe,
On foot and unattended, and alone,
To seek baptism at the prophet’s hands.

No sign of rank or wealth or lordly power
Marks Him above the humble multitude.
No “form or comeliness” of rich attire
Arrests the gaze of those who only see
The outward form and visage of mankind.
“A tender plant,” a root from parchéd ground
He springs, unnoticed by the busy world,
Among the stately trees of human power.
Nor does He shine with bright supernal light,
Credential unbelief could scarce refuse,
Reluctant still, discerning day by day,
And yet there glows a glory in His looks,
A glory not of earth, but all divine,
The innate majesty of mighty power,
The conscious dignity of heavenly birth,
And purity of soul unstained by sin,
With sweetness, gentleness and winning grace,
Of one whose love goes forth to all mankind.

The sons of light, whose wisdom may discern
Celestial truth, with reverence bow their heads,
Seeing at least a holy prophet pass.

And e'en the wicked feel some conscious awe,
As wild beasts crouch beneath the human eye.

And when the prophet sees Him drawing near,
To seek baptismal rites, he cries aloud,

“Tis I have need to be baptized of thee !
And comest thou to me ? ”

But He replies,

“ Yet suffer it to be so now : for thus
It well becometh us to quite fulfill
All righteousness, according to God’s word.”

Listen, ye thoughtful men who seek to live
By virtue of your own, or e'en to win
True piety itself, and yet neglect
The outward rites appointed by the Lord.

Are ye more perfect than the Lord Himself?
Despise ye then these channels of His grace ?
Do ye, more wisely, count them things of naught ?
Or spurn ye e'en the very grace itself,
Which those receive who really trust their Lord ?
Seek ye the Lord, while scorning His commands
Dare ye, by your example, counteract
The lesson He by His example taught ?

But look ! the rite fulfilled, heaven owns the act !
Behold the opening sky ! light gleaming through !
See from the loftiest arch a figure bright
As of a gentle dove, with outspread wings !

Lo! it descends upon the stranger's head
 And, there abiding, fills Him full of light!
 And hark! does thunder burst from cloudless sky?
 My trembling soul! it is the voice of God!

He says

“This is my well belovéd Son!”

Heart, still thy throbs! O long expected One!
 Hope of all ages, art thou come at last?
 And art thou e'en the very Son of God?

And yet the voice speaks on! Be still my soul
 And catch each syllable that falls from God!
 God owns his Son!

“In Him I am well pleased!”

O may *my* sonship thus be owned at last!
 Yet even now His spirit rests on those
 Who give themselves to Him to do His will,—
 Fulfilling e'en the forms of righteousness,—
 And like a dove, sweet messenger of heaven,
 He brings the olive branch of peace with God!

Thus consecrated and thus fortified
 By joy and strength directly sent from heaven,
 The love of Him whose favor fills with life,
 The Lord begins His great and arduous work

Behold, again, ye wise men of the earth,
 True wisdom in th' example of the Lord.
 Go ye not forth to warfare? dread ye not

The awful power of Satan's demon hosts?
Behold ye not the battlefield of life
Strown with their victims over-thrown and lost?

With clouds of sin and shame the world is dark
That should be radiant with the light of God.
And principalities and powers contend,
With vast resources of the nether world,
To keep their empire here, enslaving men.
How then must ye their hellish power resist?
And by what means the final victory gain?
Almighty power alone can victory give,
And grace alone may fit you for the strife.
Alas for those who venture forth alone
Upon the field of life, nor dream of foes
In ambush hid, unseen by mortal eyes;
Yea, even trust their flattering promises,
Nor seek the help and guidance of their God.

Follow your Saviour in the wilderness.
Far from the dwellings of His fellow-men,
From home and kindred, far from human cares,
Conducted by God's spirit, He retires.
How earnestly He seeks His Father's face!

Admiring nature views, and humbly spreads
Her varied charms round her incarnate God.
In temporary exile now she sees
The king's own Son. She also sees the man,
Belov'd of Heaven, unrecognized on earth,
But pre-ordained to bear the sins of men.

The very beasts in reverence gaze awhile,
Intruding not upon His solitude.
The sun, that calls the world to labor, looks
At morn, and eve, and from the height of noon,
But dares not summon Him to worldly toil.
(His days of manual toil were well fulfilled,
And now to nobler work He gives His soul.)
The gentle moon sends forth her silver rays,
Glist'ning among the embowering foliage,
That shields from day's fierce heat, and night's chill
dews,
And falling on His forehead lifted up
In prayer to God, reveals a beauty there
More fit for heaven, than this poor sinful world.
The twinkling stars look down from their dim
heights
To witness His devotion, and to aid
His spirit's heavenward flight. The very trees
In breathless stillness stand, and upward point
Above the shadows of the silent night,
To yon fair world where darkness cannot dwell.
How sweet this deep repose, this solemn peace,
Amid the rush and rumble of the world,
The busy world, so full of trifling cares.
How sweet the solitude and silence here,
The sacred stillness that pervades the scene
(Even to yon fair dome of azure sky),
The sweet, sublime, and awful majesty
Of glorious night! It brings our willing souls
Unto the very vestibule of heaven.

Yet sometimes you may hear a sighing sound
Among the branches, when the breath of eve
Breathes softly o'er us, whispering low of one
The gentle Holy Spirit, often grieved
By human guilt, yet yearning over men.

How fair is nature! Oh, how wondrous fair,
Whene'er she whispers to our souls, of God!
The Saviour, conscious of the influence sweet,
Rejoices in His God, and sees in all
These standing miraeles of power divine,
The handiwork of Him His soul doth love.

But chiefly now such precious words as those
That fell from heaven, "My well beloved Son,"
In whom I am well pleased," delight His soul.
But, with His joy, there comes a solemn sense
Of trials, griefs, and conflicts yet to come,
Constraining Him to cry aloud to God
For strength proportioned to His mighty task.
With patient trust He waits His Father's time,
And looks for succor in His Father's way.
Full forty days of fasting leave Him faint,
And Satan seeks his opportunity.

What guise he uses or what form assumes,
And dares to hope the Saviour to deceive,
We may not tell.

How comes he now to thee,
O tempted one? In spiritual form,
Unseen by mortal eyes, suggesting thoughts

Of strong desire for all forbidden things,
 And doubts, and questionings of saered truth,
 With specious pleadings, lies and sophistries,
 Causing the worse to seem the better part?

With equal art he tempts the Son of God.

He pleads the natural innocent desire
 For food to eat, to one with hunger faint.
 Saying

“Command these stones to turn to bread!”

What harm could be in this? to speak a word
 To satisfy His hunger, save His life,
 Test His own power and God’s preserving care?

’Tis first to things that seem most innocent
 He tempts, and pleads, “What harm can be in this?”

Thus does the crafty one insinuate
 A doubt of God’s paternal mindfulness
 Of things most needful for His children’s life.
 And thus he walkens murmurs and distrust,
 And tempts to acts which God cannot approve.
 So in besieged Samaria hear them ask,
 “Why should we any longer wait for God?”

But Jesus answers,

“Not by bread alone
 Man liveth, but by every word of God!”

O Lord, may our souls learn, from this thy word.
 More than our necessary food to love
 The “word of God,” and by its precepts live.

But, thus at first repulsed, the Tempter takes
A stolen weapon from the word of God.

And now by some mysterious spirit force
(Was't by imagination's subtle power ?
For like a flash of light it shows us things
In darkness hid, or quick transports our souls
To other ages, and to distant worlds.)
He leads the Saviour to a pinnacle
Of God's fair temple at Jerusalem.
Where towering up, far from the vale below,
It seemed a snowy mountain to the eye,
Then pointing downward from the dizzy height,
He said,

“ Now cast thyself at once from hence!
'Tis written 'He shall give His angels charge
To keep thee, and to bear thee in their hands,
With watchful care, lest thou, at any time,
Should even dash thy foot against a stone.' ”

O cunning Tempter ! when the trial fails
To tempt to unbelief, and cold distrust,
Thy next attempt is piously to urge,
To wild presumption's opposite extreme.

Christ says,

“ Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”

Then to a mountain wondrous high the Lord
He seemed to lead, and, in a moment's time,
He showed him all the kingdoms of the world,
With all their glory, pomp, and pride and power,

And said,

" All this I give to thee, if thou
Wilt fall and worship me, to do my will."

Oh, strong temptation to the human heart !
Nor is the tempting offer idly made,
For Satan's empire o'er a guilty world
Is co-extensive with the race of man.
For those who serve him he has great rewards,
Enticing, dazzling, ravishing the soul.
And if an earthly kingdom Christ now sought
By arts that please the Godless multitude,
He soon might reign a universal king.
But oh, how infinitely great His aim,
Contrasted with th' ambitions, hopes and fears
Of worldly men. The kingdom He desires
Is not of this vain world, not built on force,
Nor marked by outward pomp and vain pretense.
He seeks His empire in true loving souls,
Emancipated, purified, redeemed,
And made triumphant over sin and death.
He seeks once more to bring rebellious man
To true allegiance to His rightful Lord;
" For other lords have had dominion " here,
And misery and death have reigned with sin.

Now since this foul temptation plainly shows
Its hateful source, the Saviour's holy soul
Is greatly moved, e'en to its lowest depths.
Indignant and abhorrent, loud He cries,

“Get thee behind me, Satan! It is writ
That thou shalt worship only God the Lord!
Him only shalt thou serve!”

Now Satan flies,
Discovered, baffled, overthrown and scorned!

Oh, may this triumph teach us all to win
The greatest victory to mortals given,
Not over “flesh and blood,” with brutal force,
But “over principalities, and powers,”
And wicked spirits throned in places high.

Now angels come with loving joyful haste,
To minister to their beloved Lord.
Revealed in light and beauty, lo! they stand,
And reverently bow before their king.

His hunger well enjoys the heavenly fast,
But richer far the bliss that fills His soul
At this new token of His Father’s love,
Crowning His triumph o’er His hellish foe.

Rejoice, O earth, at this great victory!
(Far less Issus, Pharsalia, Waterloo!)
A triumph over hell for all mankind!

’Twas needful that the second Adam stand,
Where fell the first, before the Tempter’s wiles,
Each representing all the human race;
For “as in Adam all men once have died,
So all in Jesus Christ are made alive.”
Suspended, for a time, the sentence dread,

That dooms to instant and eternal death,
Men still live out their span of earthly life,
And have once more the opportunity
Eternal life and blessedness to gain.

Each for himself the Tempter now must meet
To prove His choice of evil or of good,
And who would choose the evil for itself,
Save those already willing slaves of hell?

Temptation's strength must lie in its deceit,
Which makes the bad seem innocent and good.
Yet great the danger now to fallen man,
Too easily deceived, because his heart,
To evil now inclined, prefers the choice
By Adam made of seeming earthly good,
To spiritual good conferred by heaven;
Prefers the tree of sinful knowledge here,
To "knowing" "soon," "e'en as ourselves are
known;"
Prefers the wisdom by the Tempter taught,
Though "earthly, sensual, devilish," vain, and false,
To precepts of the Infinitely Wise.
"Deceitful more than all things" is His heart.
Unchecked by heaven 'tis "desperately bad."
Yet God can give the victory to those
That choose the right, and seek His grace divine.

From triumph o'er the Tempter in His soul,
The Lord went forth to meet him in the world,
And overthrow His empire o'er mankind.
O sad and dreary empire! Lord, how long

Shall Satan reign, and ply his hellish arts?
How long shall sin and sorrow, death and woe,
Hold carnival among the sons of men ?
How long shall God, the King of Righteousness,
Be hated and defied in His own realms?
How long shall wickedness and folly reign,
And senseless stocks be raised in place of God ?
How long shall mammon cheat the hearts of men,
With worldly wealth and joys, in place of heaven ?
How dark and dreadful Satan's mighty power
O'er this fair world ! How deep his thralldom vile !

And no mere mortal may his throne o'erthrow.
Nor meant he by his subtle promise made
(“All this I give, if thou wilt worship me,”)
The kingdoms and the glory of the world)
To yield his kingdom to its rightful Lord.
But Christ, refusing aught of Satan's gifts,
Refusing e'en the kingdoms of the world,
As lord lieutenant at the serpent's hand,
Prepared to overthrow his kingdom proud,
Proclaiming wide the universal king,
And saying unto sinful men

“Repent;

The kingdom true of heav'n is now at hand.”

Not by the force of arms, or warlike hosts,
But by the mightier force of truth and love,
He sought to build the kingdom of the Lord.
Sure it had been an easy task to win
The multitudes to choose Him as their king,

And drill them into engines vast and strong,
Fit implements of Moloch's bloody power,
Or double-headed Janus, or of Mars,
Urged, like the dreadful car of "Juggernaut
(‘Lord of *this* world’ a frightful idol god),"’
Relentless over precious human forms
Måde in the image of the living God!

O dreadful war! with all thy pomp and pride.
Thou servest Satan’s hellish hate of men,
And makest men thy instruments of wrath.
Lo! king-like men, endowed with gifts
Of reason, love, and power almost divine,
Are made the parts of this immense machine,
That like a soulless dragon, glaring bright,
With many hues, yet horrid, fierce,
And bristling dire with death, moves winding on,
With brazen clamor through the crowded streets.
Justice, or direst wrong, and cruel wrath,
Alike it serves, obedient to one will,
Perchance of patriot, wise, and good, and true,
Who for his country cheerfully would die,
Perchance of mere adventurer bold, and bad,
Ready, for self, to rule or wreck a world;—
Or e’en of crazy king, like Russian Paul.

Christ chose a force to build His kingdom fair,
Of wondrous power to move the souls of men,
The loving word proclaimed by living voice,
The force of uttered truth, tho’ oft despised
As “foolishness of preaching” by the world,
Yet “mighty through the Lord to pulling down

Strongholds of sin and Satan, casting down
Imaginations vain, and everything
Itself exalting 'gainst the living God.'"
The weapons of His warfare were not forged
By hellish fires to drink the blood of men.
Conceived by love divine, and framed in heaven
As holy oracles imparting life,
They all were aimed to save the souls of men.

Lo! Christ Himself this holy office bears,
The Son of God thus condescending here
To be a preacher (though despised by men),
To serve the Lord, and save and bless mankind.

Come join the multitudes who follow Christ,
A plain wayfarer through His native land,
Accustomed to address the wayside crowds,
In simple talks, first healing all their sick ;
He now beholds a more extensive field,
A people ready for the "Word of God."
The sick in body were a favored few
Had they alone received His healing touch.
They were indeed but few compared with those
Whose souls require the balm of heavenly grace.
All, all are sick with sin! And he alone,
The Great Physician, brings the remedy.

We follow with the crowd, an eager crowd,
Yet not engaged with common thoughts and aims.
To see a passing show, or while away
An idle hour, or win some worldly joy,—
With solemn purpose we desire to hear

The truths of heaven, from one by heaven illumined,
Who comes the heavenly kingdom to proclaim.

So great the multitude but few can see
The mighty prophet. Few can catch His words.
But look ! We see one leave the crowded vale.
Is't He? It is! He climbs the rocky steeps!
Come! follow me!

Here at this loftier height,
Near where He pauses (glad to be so near,
Though scores still stand between us and the Lord).
Here may we view the multitude that fill
The mount and vale below.

Our thoughts run back
To Ebal and to Gerizim, where once
Our sires pronounced the blessing and the curse.
The tribes of Israel were gathered there,
A mighty host, that filled th' extensive plain,
And o'er them swept the voice of hope or doom,
That back and forth surged strong from mount to
mount,
Like winds of heav'n breathing of balm and peace,
Or wailing forth the misery of the lost !
And all the multitude pronounced amen !

Less awful now the sweet solemnity
That seems to consecrate both earth and sky.
Here in this solitary wilderness,
Our homes forgot, we lift our thoughts on high.
The earth itself puts on a heavenly garb;
The peaceful landscape, stretching far away,

Gives not a single hint of sin or woe;
And through the vault of heaven, which seems so
near,
We feel that God is searching all our souls.
One spirit now pervades the multitude,
A silent and attentive company,
Who wait the voice of Him who speaks from heaven.
Among them we discern the silver heads
Of venerable men, whose names, well known,
Are synonyms of worth, or wealth and power.
Among them too are dames of high degree,
Young men and maidens with their raven locks
And little children innocent and fair.
All eyes are turned to Christ of Galilee.
Lo! seated on a rock to rest His limbs,
Fatigued with toils and travels, He awaits
The gathering round Him of His chosen twelve.

List! He begins! Let every sound be still!
How sweet! Yet how majestic is His voice!
Borne on the quiet air from this pure height,
Like gentle dew on thirsty soil it falls
(Or rain upon the grass, long mown and dry),
With heaven's own benedictions on our hearts.

But oh, how strange His words! How different far
From common talk of scribes and Pharisees!
How far above the maxims of the world!
Yea, "as the heaven is high above the earth,
So high are His pure thoughts above our thoughts!"
They thrill us with a strange unwonted sense

Of guilt, and privilege. We see how low
Our souls have fallen from the will of God!
How low our views of His commandment given
To lift our hearts from selfishness and sin.
He asks the living fruit of loving hearts.
We offer Him the husks of outward forms.
Yet great our privilege to hear His voice
Interpreting in love his blest commands,
Pronouneing blessings on the pure and meek
And lifting up our hearts and hopes to heaven.

From this time forth the Lord pursued His work,
His great and wondrous work, to bless mankind,
As sunlight pierces through the murky fogs,
That through the dismal night have gathered thick,
With poisonous exhalations o'er the plains,
Curing their pain and scattering all their gloom;
So Christ the "Sun of Righteousness" arose,
"With healing in His wings" for sinful men.
Day after day He sought, with patient feet,
Through many a weary mile and toilsome day,
To do His Father's errands, and to find
The homes of sorrow, and the haunts of sin,
To cheer, to heal, to purify and save.

Did sage, philanthropists, or hero e'er
(Save His own followers) do a work like His?
Or any fol'wer e'er sueh wondrous work?
"The blind received their sight, the lame did walk,
The dead were raised." Yet, better far than all,
"The poor received the gospel freely preached."

Yes, "better far than all," the tidings glad
That raised dead souls, condemned and lost in sin,
To God's own image and immortal life.

Nor this alone. He sympathized with all,
Rejoicing e'en with those that did rejoice,
And weeping for the woes of those that wept.
His presence crowned the happy festive scene,
And consolation brought to homes bereaved.
He hungered, speaking no impatient word
Himself to feed, yet, with a few small loaves,
He fully fed the hungry multitude.
Tossed on the billows in a little boat,
Pillowed His weary head and calmly slept,
Yet, when His followers cried, as calmly rose,
And bade the angry surges, "Peace be still;"
Sat thirsty at the well and "asked for drink,"
Yet offered "living waters" to bestow,
That those who drink should never thirst again.

Thus by His daily life He plainly proved
The mighty truth delivered by His lips,
The union strange in Him of God and man.

The gracious power and presence of the Lord
Abides in all His servants, but in Him
"The fullness of the Godhead bodily."

Magnificent indeed is human power,
To think, to speak, to do; and to combine
The wisdom, industry, and strength and skill
Of multitudes of men; yea, to employ

The lore of ages to accomplish works,
That seem like monuments of power divine.
We witness structures lifting up their spires
To heights sublime, where, having toiled with pain,
Our trembling souls grow giddy as they gaze.
Yet oft these airy pinnacles of stone,
With charming grace, show adamantine strength,
Defying storms and mocking e'en at time.
From shore to shore men span the dread abyss
Where raging waters scorn their puny feet,
And underneath the waves they make their way,
And drive their vehicles on light'ning wheels.

Great is the subtle power of human thought,
A thing which has no substance, sense or sound ;
We hardly dare to call it entity,
Which, though existing, yet no being claims;
A thing impalpable to human sense,
Nor can we even say 'tis born of sense,
For souls with senses closed to earthly things
May still have thoughts, tho' meagre, vague, and
dim,
Like vaporous clouds at night quite unillumed
Moving and circling round themselves alone.
Life is not born of food, but when 'tis born
Food must sustain it, or it ends in death.

As sunshine must be rendered visible
By various forms and atoms where it falls,
And, when condensed by burning glass, will glow
In light producing flames, so human thought

Some subject of reflection first must find,
E'er it can glow or kindle other thought;
But when condensed by some great mental lens,
With fitting fuel fed, with flames well fanned,
The subtle spark may conflagration start.

Oh, wonderful the mighty power of thought!
And most mysterious too the hidden link
That so connects it with a form of flesh !

O man ! In God's own wondrous image formed,
O'er matter's mighty forces ruler made,
By mightier forcee of well directed thought,
How shouldst thou prize true wisdom, all divine
This may enthrone thee, e'en in worlds unseen,
And make thee heir of everlasting life
Learn too a lesson of humility ;
For what hast thou, not first received from God ?
And what is e'en thy power, save as it acts
Through power of others equal to thyself ?

But Christ by His own lordship rules o'er all.
The water heard His voice and turned to wine ;
The boisterous billows bowed beneath His feet ;
The yielding depths grew strong to bear His tread ;

The furious winds were hushed at His rebuke ;
The fruitless fig-tree withered at His word ;
Diseases dire, that held their loathsome sway
O'er breaking hearts, gave way to health and joy ;
And e'en in distant realms sweet hope revived,
Where gathering gloom foreboded coming death ;

Yea, death itself (oh, joy to dying man!)
Dismissing frowns, grew pale at His command,—
Relentless death relaxed his rigid grasp,
And owned His dreadful empire overthrown.
Bereavement welcomed back its lost with smiles,
And mourning changed its wails of woe to songs.

But not o'er death alone He showed His power,
But “over him who had the power of death,”
“Delivering them who through the fear of death,
Were held in painful bondage all their lives.”

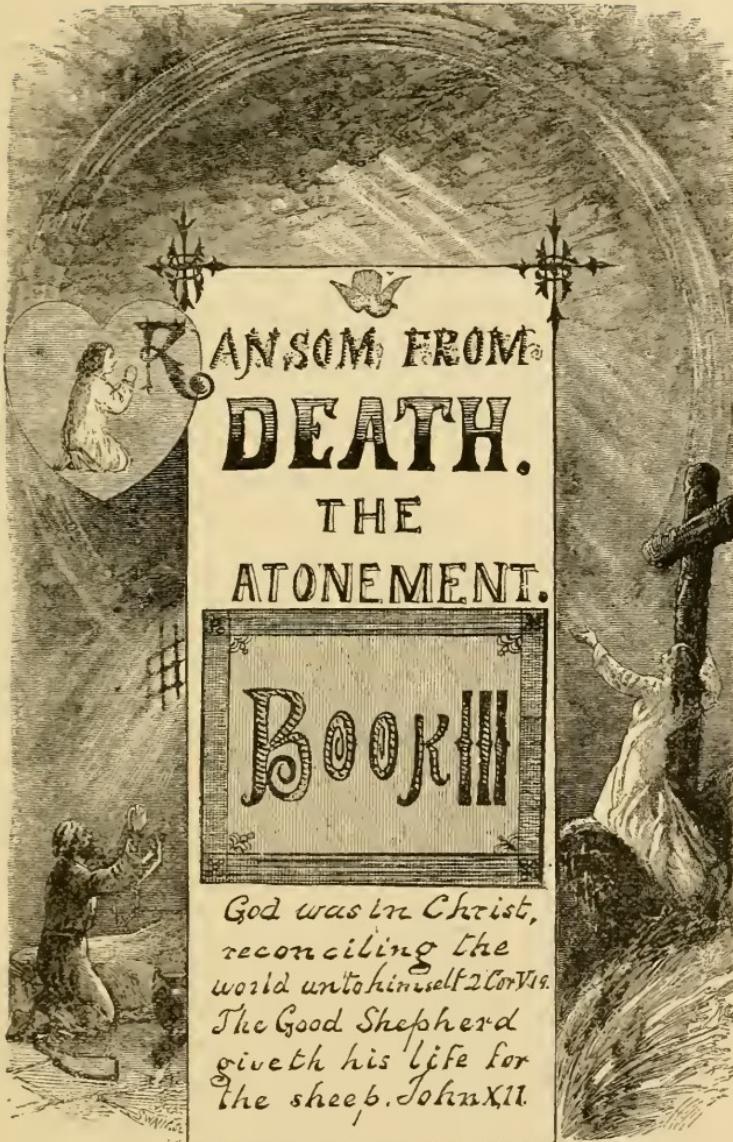
Nor power alone, but wisdom, truth and love,
Shone radiant through each fibre of His life.
No thread of folly, selfishness, deceit,
Nor aught of weakness, worldliness, or pride
Appeared to mar the lustre of the whole.
Nor was there break, repentance needs must join—
His web of life, a perfect cloth of gold,
Was “woven” like His garment “without seam.”
A little folly, like a little fly
Embalmed in amber, mars a perfect whole,
Yet who from folly e'er was wholly free,
Save Him who “Holy, harmless, undefiled,”
Was truly “separate” from sinful men !

In Him was life: John i. 4. In Him we live, and move, and have our being, Acts xvii. 28.

RANSOM FROM
DEATH.
THE
ATONEMENT.



God was in Christ,
reconciling the
world unto himself 2 Cor viii.
The Good Shepherd
giveth his life for
the sheep John XII.



PROEM.

Now we approach, with deep humility,
A theme so grand, momentous, and sublime,
That unassisted human thought is whelmed
Before its mysteries. Kind Heaven alone
Can give us light. Yet most important too,
Of deepest interest, most supreme concern,
Its truths to men, to guide us in this life,
Or save us for eternity.

'Tis this,—

THE RECONCILIATION OF OUR RACE
(NOW LOST IN SIN) TO OUR OFFENDED GOD !

How may we, wanderers, now so far removed,
Be once again, in peace, brought nigh to God?
How may our souls be freed from sin and death,
From vileness and corruption fully cleansed,
And thus made “meet to dwell with saints in light?”

Where God doth reign sin cannot also reign.
(Alas! It reigns supreme in human hearts!)
Nay, more,—one sin debars the soul from Heaven!
Naught that defileth e'er can enter in
The holy realms by God's own throne illumined.
Night cannot dwell with day, nor sin with God.
Sin e'er defiles and taints the soul with death,
And in the Holy Oracles of God

'Tis writ,

"The soul that sinneth it shall die!"

How, then, remove the curse from sinful souls?

How break sin's dreadful yoke? How purify
The heart corrupted by its loathsomeness?

How wash away to snowy white again

The soul's indelible and scarlet dyes?

How breathe new life? How once again restore
God's image fair, effaced from human souls?

It were an easier task to breathe new life

In old decaying coffins, and to bid

The bloom of youth and beauty spring from dust.

Yet this the problem Jesus came to solve!—

The mighty task he ventured to perform!

Let Hercules the Augean stables cleanse,

Or Atlas on his shoulders bear the world,

'Twere childish sport, beside the work of Christ!

And childish fables, too, these tales of men.

More wonderful is God's eternal truth.

BOOK THIRD.

Christ Jesus came from Heaven to save the lost!

Choose ye to doubt?—Not willing to obey
The holy will of Christ, nor yield your souls
For which he came to die, prefer ye now
Some other teacher? other advocate
Before the throne of God? some other friend
In passing through death's deeps?

Where will ye find

One so replete with power and grace divine?
So competent to satisfy the soul?
What priest, philosopher, or king, e'er dared,
Or ever dreamed of work like that of Christ?

Doubt ye, who choose! Alas! how can ye doubt?
Yet still the wretched liberty remains
(Awhile remains) for those who doubt prefer.
'Tis yours, awhile, to disobey God's laws,
To contradict his word, revile his Church,
To scorn his love, blaspheme his holy name,
Yea, even, for a while, defy his wrath!

Awhile 'tis yours God's witness to refuse
E'en though he asks an act of faith so small,
That reason asks, "When will ye fools be wise?"

The time soon comes when faith is asked no more,
The time when faith no longer may avail;—
No longer it remains to disbelieve.

Ye who "believe, and tremble," now, in Hell,
Well know the woe of hating truth divine.

God grant us all the wisdom to decide,
With David,

"I do choose the way of truth."
And may the blessed privilege be ours,
Bestowed on all receiving Christ as Lord,
"The power to be the very sons of God."

"Behold the Lamb of God!"

(Oh, ponder well
The words of Christ's own Herald,—unrebuked)

"Taking away the sins of all the world!"

"The Lamb of God!"

Provided by the Lord,
As once declared unconscious Abraham,
"My son, God will provide himself a lamb."

Oh, faith sublime! Yet knowing not the depths
Of hidden meaning in these simple words!
For in the place of that beloved Son
God did a lamb provide, the type of Him
The very Lamb of God, and very Son of God,
In place of our own sons,—in our own place.

Behold how wonderful the love of God!
The heathen, when they sinned against their gods,
Brought offerings to appease their furious wrath.
They hoped to purchase favor, and to lay
Their sins upon the heads of bulls and goats.

Ah, vain the slaughter ! Poor the substitute
They offered in the place of their own souls.
Diviner wisdom clearly shows that blood
“ Of bulls and goats can never cleanse from sin ! ”

But God himself provides a sacrifice,
Not to appease a weak and jealous wrath,
But satisfy eternal righteousness.

But dost thou ask “ What need of sacrifice ? ”

Wouldst thou impugn the goodness of the Lord,
And dare to charge with useless cruelty ?
Hear thou God’s answer, through his servant Paul.

“ If by the law, there come true righteousness,
Then Christ is dead in vain.”

But think’st thou, still,

“ Jehovah must accept the penitent,
Cancel his sin, and, when he lives aright,
Receive and bless him for his righteousness ? ”

Can penitence alone atonement make,
That which is done undo, make right the wrong,
And glorify God’s violated law ?

Then sin and penitence keep equal steps,
And crime receives no certain penalty,—
The cunning sinner, then, outwits his God.
He breaks God’s law, but parries punishment.
Repenting late, when he can sin no more,
He finds his life of sin, though unatoned,
Rewarded like a life of godliness.
Oh, fatal folly ! fancy most absurd !

The Devil's doctrine to delude the lost !
 The soul that hopes to cheat th' Omniscient One
 Itself is cheated ! Satan's certain prey !
 Without atonement penitence is vain !
 Nay, true repentance is impossible
 (By which the soul is fully reconciled)
 Unless by God inspired. And first, the way
 Must be prepared by him.

But list God's word,
 "There can be no remission for our sins
 Without the flow of blood."

'Tis in this lies
 The life of man. And life is forfeited
 By sin. Sin is itself the seed of death,
 Whence *death* must ever spring. Can *life* ?
 No more
 Than figs from thorns! or grapes from thistles grow ?
 Nor dies alone the body. E'en the soul,
 Which sin contaminates, forever dies,
 With no redemptive power within itself :—
 Forever dies, and yet forever lives,
 With no true life of God, but still exists,
 A sad intelligence, forever doomed, .
 By free choice of its own, to dwell apart
 From all the throbbing, loving life of God.

Behold the wretched state of one whose vice
 Has early wrecked his life. The prisoner,
 Self doomed, from solitary chamber views,
 With bitterness, the life he shares no more.

How bright and beautiful it seems to those
Who feel its pulses, joying in its joy.
The birds that warble forth their Maker's praise,
Or hail their mates, or tell, with cooings soft,
Their mutual loves, leaping from bough to bough,
Or darting swift (like arrow to its mark)
On errands of their own, these, in their place,
Fulfill their ends, brimful of happy life,
And merry children, flushed with sport and glee
With shouts and ringing laughter fill the air,
And busy men, alive with eager hope,
Pursue, each one, some weighty enterprise.
Lo ! what a surging, overflowing tide
Of bright, exultant, joyous, hopeful life
But you poor wretch has only learned to hate
The life he shares not :—yet he dare not die !
Nay ! It is not his to find repose in death,
Though he would “dig for death as treasure hid,
Rejoicing, with exceeding joy, to find
The grave,” that might forever hide his woes.
A dreadful weight lies heavy on his heart,
And dark despair beclouds his wretched soul.
He loathes himself ! He loathes the vicious joys
That so deceived his heart and wrecked his soul.
Yet has he now no power, no wish to rise
To purer pleasures, nobler, holier aims.
Sweet hope is his no more, and love is dead.
(Scarce has it lived, where self has reigned supreme.)
Not even mem'ry yields the least relief.
His vile delights he now would fain forget.

Remorse, and shame, and hopeless grief corrode
His miserable heart, and hatred fierce,
To all that's good, embitters all his soul.
A living death is his, more dreadful, far,
Than dissolution's transitory pains!
We come the throes of mortal agony
Could they forever end more dreadful life!
Oh, weary, weary life! Oh, wretched soul!
Where shall it look for mercy? Where for love?
What consolation yet remains, in life or death?
Alas, kind pity, art thou also dead?

Behold the dreadful ripened fruit of vice:
Speedier, but not more sure of woe, than sin.

'Twas from such death the Saviour came to save,
And to redeem our souls he offered up,
Not blood alone but also his own soul.

In Isaiah's glowing page we read that God
Would "make his soul an offering for sin."

Blood is the type of this amazing grace!
The blood of Jesus Christ! It "speaketh better
things

Than blood of Abel." This but tells of death,
The first fulfilment of the threatened doom,
The type and propheey of human death.

But oh, what Gospel in the blood of Christ!
A wondrous tale of mingled joy and grief!
"Glad tidings" for the lost, of sin atoned,
Of full forgiveness thus made possible,
"Propitiation" made for human guilt,

“Remission” given, for “sins already past,”
That “God may now be just, and justify
Him who believes in Christ!

And sorrow too,

That God’s Beloved Son, our gracious Lord,
Our dear and loving Friend, whose tender heart
Yearned over wretched souls of sinful men,
The “holy, harmless, undefiled,” and good,
Should suffer dreadful death, by cruel hands
Of those he came to save, and that our sins
Should add the poison to his bitter cup,
Should “crucify our patient Lord afresh,”
And, once more, put him to an open shame.

Not with corruptible or common things
Were we redeemed, “but with the precious blood
Of Jesus Christ,” our Lord, “as of a lamb
Without a blemish, and without a spot.”

Yet true redemption or atonement, still
Some, disbelieving, would explain away
With subtle speculations of their own.
Subtle and learned, they curiously evade
The obvious meaning of the Word of God,
The common ancient faith of God’s redeemed
(But God’s true Church still deems his Word more
wise,)

Not humbly heeding ancient symbols given,
Or plainest statements of the later Word,
They scorn the blood, and boldly theorize
From *fancies*, and from *feelings*, of *their own*!

“Not yet has ceased the offence of Jesus’ Cross.”
They say

“God simply shows his hate of sin,
His love of righteousness, and pardoning grace,
By making Christ a spectacle to men.”

Does God then *dramatize*, like cunning men,
Who live for show, more than for righteousness?
Was Christ’s great sacrifice a needless crime,
Like that of Arria for her coward spouse?
She *saved no life, but showed a wondrovs love.*
Thrusting her dagger to her heart she cried
“It gives no pain, my Petus!”

Is this all
Our Saviour does for us?—teach us to die?
God’s Word declares

“The blood of Jesus Christ
Doth cleanse from all our sins.”

Wouldst thou amend,
And say “It teaches us to cleanse ourselves?
’Twas but a striking object lesson given
To plainly show the world important truth,
The beauty of self-sacrificing love?”

Alas! A most misleading lesson then,
Deceiving God’s own church in every age,
And kindling empty hopes of cancelled sin,
And full salvation freely given to all
Who fully trust in Christ’s atoning work!
In vain! A mere display, obscurely given,
To warn our trembling souls to save themselves!—

Or—sacrifice themselves for other's good!
Did Arria alone the lesson learn?

But some still ask

“How can one suff'rer's blood
Atone for others' sins?”

We may not tell

The full extent of God's eternal law.

It is “exceeding broad!” “Unsearchable
His judgments, and his ways past finding out.”
But glimmerings of the truth e'en now are seen,
From facts familiar in this mortal state.

The sovereign of a realm whose laws change not
(Like those of Medes and Persians) makes decree
Concerning acts forbidden or enjoined.

One province disregards and breaks these laws.

'Twere easy to o'erwhelm the rebel state,
Or cut it wholly off, and e'er debar
Its citizens from every privilege,
Or further favor flowing from the throne.

The king is merciful, as well as just.

How shall he then exact the penalty,
Repentance win, and save the penitents?

Repentance only, e'en if fully won,
Leaves debt unpaid, and duty unfulfilled,—
Nay, more, the broken law dishonored still.
But one appears able to pay the debt,
Fulfill the duty,—even willing too
To bear the dreadful penalty himself.

He offers thus to cov'nant with the king.
Shall aught proscribe the sacred covenant?
Doth mercy, justice, equity forbid?
The law is not evaded, but fulfilled,
Justice exacts its rightful penalty,
And mercy, too, rejoices in the deed,—
Not that the innocent must agonize,
But that the guilty now are purged from guilt,
And help is laid upon a Mighty One,
Able to bear, and save.”

“ The problem great
Were but a simple one, were debt, not guilt,
Thus to be satisfied ; but why transfer
From guilt to innocence a load of woe ?”

We answer thus,

Guilt is to be condemned,
And of its condemnation this is part,
The woe it brings upon the innocent.
The earth doth share the curse of human guilt.
“ The creature, subject unto vanity,
Groaneth and travaileth in pain till now.”

Behold yon prison ! In its dreary cells,
Behind its iron bars, like cagéd beasts,
Are men arraigned, for crime. Deep is their woe
While self-respect and honor still are theirs,
While truth and reputation still are dear.
How sweet seems liberty, now lost ! how hard
The prison discipline, the fare, the couch,
And all the stern and cheerless daily round.

But infinitely worse the shame, and pain,
The degradation, and the deep disgrace,
Which spirits proud and sensitive must feel,
To be thus branded, by their fellow men,
As felons, more to be despised than beasts.
But oft the innocent must suffer most,
Made scapegoats, cruelly, by heartless knaves,
Who, old in sin, most cunningly escape.
And men made hard by crime, and penalty,
Oft lose their sense of shame and punishment.
Their mourning wives and little ones, at home,
With hearts made raw, must face a scornful world,
And bear the pangs of want, and care, and shame.
The innocent must ever suffer thus,—
Both with and for the guilty, live and die.

Yet none are wholly innocent,—“not one,”—
And all must share some suff’ring for their sins
(Paternal chastisement is for our good,)
But final condemnation Christ averts
From those who trust him, bearing all their sins.

He came, not to condemn the world, but save,
Condemning not the sinner, but the sin.

“For what the law could not, in that ‘twas weak,
Through sinful flesh, God, sending his own Son,
In form and likeness of our sinful flesh,
And for our sins, condemned sin in the flesh.”

Was then this condemnation, after all,
Merely a moral lesson for the world?
Nay! Sin must e’er receive its just deserts,

And had there been no worlds to witness it,
The punishment had still been duly laid.
But Christ, a voluntary victim, “ bore
Our sins, in his own body, on the tree.”

If sin be thus both punished, and condemned,
The sinner justified, and freed from guilt,
And purified from sin, through faith in Christ,
Justice is satisfied,—God glorified.

But still some curious questioner may ask,
“ How can the blood of one atone for all?
And how brief woe save everlasting doom ? ”

Forgetest thou the dignity of him
Who makes the sacrifice? Dost thou not deem
A moment’s suffering of the Infinite
Equal to everlasting woe of souls
Infinitesimal compared to Him?
Insects and vermin have their little woes.
What were they all compared to that of Him
Who lays His royal honors down, and yields
His very life to save His subjects’ lives?
“ The nations in His sight are but a drop,
The small dust of the balance,” and the world
Is but a “ little thing,” yet He doth stoop
By His own suffering to redeem the world.

Were justice satisfied with nothing less
Than that the Saviour must forever die,
Justice were then but cruelty indeed,
Behold the Hebrew in the lion’s den.

In vain his loving king had sought to save
His righteous subject from the stern decree!
That could not change: but God could interpose
To keep his servant from the lions' mouths.
Must then the king himself the victim slay?
No! His the joy that (all the law fulfilled)
He now might welcome back his friend alive!
So God, His darling from the lion saved.
And now "God can be just and justify
Him who believes in Christ," and thus receives
The full atonement made for human guilt.

Why, then, should men both subtle, learned and
good
Still cavil at a scheme so good and grand,
That so exalts God's just and holy law,
That so displays God's glory, love and grace,
And makes so plain the way of life for man!
Why still decry the value of that death
Whereon our souls still rest their dearest hopes?
Or why obscure, with glosses of their own,
The plain, unvarnished teachings of the law?

Ah! Here behold Satanic subtlety!
The craft of him who meets God's truth with lies.
Defeated oft, he still would nullify,
In many hearts, the virtue of Christ's blood.
Persuading once the princes of the world
To hate, reject and crucify their Lord,
His triumph seemed complete. Yet e'en by death
The Saviour conquered still. And now the foe

Would undermine the temple of that faith,
Whose corner-stone was laid in Christ's own blood.
Ah, might he substitute, for that true rock,
Some crumbling stone prepared by his own hand,
He hopes at last the temple too will fall.
Well knows the Tempter how to use the powers
Of subtle men (more subtle far himself)
By puffing them with pride and vain conceit
Of their own subtlety, superior power,
And wisdom to discern "the things that are."

But wouldest thou know the truth? Learn then that
God

"Resisteth all the proud, but giveth grace
Unto the humble," glad to learn of HIM.

'Twas with a knowledge sure, and foresight clear
That Christ anticipates the dreadful hour
For which He came into this world of sin.

Witness that evening interview with him,
Who, early in the Saviour's brief career,
His counsel seeks concerning things of God.
The venerable man, a ruler proud,
Now humbly waits upon the peasant youth,
Convinced, indeed, his teachings come from God,
Yet half ashamed lest men should scorn his act.

Oh, memorable meeting! Man, with God,
In human form, holds wonderful discourse,
Of things essential to our peace with God.
Proud Pharisee, convinced of thine own need,

If humble now, how would thy trembling soul
Lie whelmed and prostrate, didst thou know thy
Lord !

How art thou startled at his opening word,
Oh, hear him,

“Verily I say to thee,
EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN,”

Strange words!

“HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF THE LORD !”

Not e'en the Pharisee, whose chief concern
Is for the law and service of our God,
Shall see the Lord he does not truly love.
The service springing not from faith and love
(Which only new-born souls can ever feel)
Is not the service of the sons of God.
'Tis but the toil of slaves, the grudging tasks
Of cringing and reluctant enemies.
All, all is dead. Loaded with God's own gifts,
Yet thoughtless, thankless, unbelieving still,
Unwilling to obey God's just commands
The human soul must needs be born again.

But how can man be born again, when old?
Without a choice, we helpless entered life:
Now have we power to new-create ourselves?
Can we impart new vigor to our blood,
And thus renew our youth ? Or can we change
Our natures, dispositions, habits, tastes,
And thus commend ourselves to God's free grace ?

“Nay,” says our Lord, “that which is born of flesh
Is flesh, and spirit, that of spirit born.”

“Then what responsibility hath man?
What can he do to work the works of God?
What power or choice to free himself from death?
What faculty to exercise toward life?”

‘Tis faith alone! The faith that “works by love”
Must cleanse the eyes now thickly filmed by sin,
And give the power to look on things divine.

‘Tis faith must purify the worldly heart,
And kindle sparks of holy love to God.

“By faith ye must be saved, through grace, and that
Not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”

“But, Gracious Master, how can these things be?”

“Dost thou not know these things? A master too!
We speak that we do know, and testify
What we have seen, but ye believe us not
(Mere theories of men full credence gain—
But facts, accredited by witness sure,
Which bear against your carnal lives, ye scorn).
If when I tell of earthly things, ye still
Believe me not, how can ye then believe
Of heavenly things?

(Yet who can better tell)

For no man hath ascended into Heaven
Except the Son of Man e'en now in Heaven
(And he alone can tell of things divine).
Hear, then, the mystery I now unfold.

As Moses lifted, in the wilderness,
The serpent for a sign, that dying men
Might give the look of faith and live again,
So must the Son of Man be lifted up,
That whosoever will believe in Him,
May perish not, but have eternal life;
For God so loved the world as e'en to give
His well beloved, sole begotten Son,
That whosoever will in Him believe,
May, saved from death, have everlasting life."

Thus Christ made known his sacrificial work,
As John had first proclaimed him "Lamb of God."
And, with this sacred knowledge in his breast,
He lived and labored day by day with men,
And night by night he sought the God he loved.

O meek and lowly One, serene and blest.
Above the proud and anxious sons of men,
Thou hast the secret of the truest life !

It is to live "by every Word of God,"
To learn God's will, and truly to desire
And daily pray that all may be fulfilled.
Thus Christ says to His Father,

"Lo ! I come,"

In Thy blest volume it is writ of me,
"To do thy will, O God."

And thus he prays,

"O Holy Father, glorify thyself,
And not my will, but thine be done, O God."

Why then need anxious cares disturb thy breast?
Thy great ambition shall be all fulfilled!
And, though it costs thee temporary pain,
Thou soon shalt see the travail of thy soul,
And be forever, fully "satisfied!"

Not for himself Christ spends his busy years.
More calmly he anticipates the hour
Of final sacrifice, than worldly men
(Counted earth's heroes) hasten to the day
Which lifts them to the pinnacles of power.

Oh, hear him, ye who live for self and sin.
"The thief doth come to kill, and to destroy,
But I am come that ye might all *have life*,"
And also have it "more abundantly."

Thus by example, and atoning blood,
Christ brings dead souls to life and light divine.
A life so wholly consecrate to God,
And to the good of men, in word and deed,
Was never witnessed in this world of sin.

Oh, true and high ambition, thus to be
Ordained a consecrated "Lamb of God,"
Whose highest end is God to glorify,
And be the source of truest life to men!

"*And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.*" 2 Cor. v. 15.

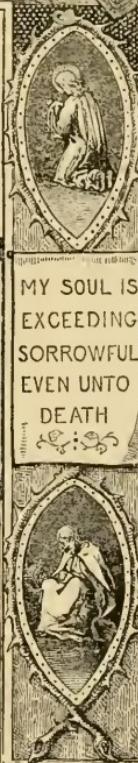
GETHSEMANES

THE AWFUL SHADOW
OF
DEATH.

BOOK IV

All thy waves and
thy billows are gone
over me Ps. XLII.7.
This is your hour, and
the power of darkness
Luke XXII.53.

MY SOUL IS
EXCEEDING
SORROWFUL
EVEN UNTO
DEATH



PROEM.

Dread night is here !

I waken from a troubled sleep,
But seem to drift upon the deep,—

A lonely sea of fear !

O sleep, I struggle to regain
Thy sweet forgetfulness, in vain
What ill is near ?

O dreadful sea !

I gaze upon thy waters wide,
Whose awful depths, and surging tide,
Are full of mystery,
And from thy dark and cold embrace,
Emerging, lo ! a pallid face,
I, trembling, see !

A sleeping eye,

In solemn visions of the night,
Arrests my sad reluctant sight,
Of one about to die !
In vain I strive my thoughts to turn ;—
Its lessons now I first must learn !
It will not fly !

Darker the line,

The fringed edge that bars the day !
It marks the progress of decay,
While I in vain repine.

The gathering wax death's victory shows !
The lesson those closed lids disclose
Must now be mine !

I lift my heart,
And offer up a silent prayer,
That God my life, at least, may spare,
 And bid the dream depart.
And trembling now my spirit fills,
And through my frame run shuddering chills,—
 Cold sweat drops start !

But steadfast still
The vision seeks its dreadful close.
The band of death still darker grows.
 Disgust and horror thrill
My trembling soul. Lo, death still feeds
Corruption in those eyelids breeds !
 Death takes its fill !

O Lord, impart
The secret of a sight so dread !
This solemn lesson from the dead !
 To my poor trembling heart !
At this mere vision of the night
Why should my soul, with shuddering fright,
 And horror start ?

Full well I know
That loathsomeness and foul decay
Must change my frame to mouldering clay.
 Is this my greatest foe ?

Nay ! Far more loathsome still, is sin !

Defiling all my soul within !

This is my woe !

But let me see

My Saviour wrapped in death's dread shade,
By God's own dreadful frown dismayed,

In sad Gethsemane !

'Neath loathsome sin and death's dread flood.
He agonized with drops of blood !

And all for me !

BOOK FOURTH.

Blest are the chosen ones, who daily drink
From Heavenly streams of truest life divine,
Who constant converse and communion hold
With that Blest One ordained of God to be
Our "Prophet, Priest, and everlasting King."

Deeply they venerate, most truly love,
And follow, faithfully, their chosen Lord,
Chosen of Him, and honored in the choice,
Above all others of their fellow men,
Though much despised by those the world calls
great,
Content to be cast out and scorned of men,
If cherished in their Heavenly Father's heart.
And truly are they loved by Him, whose love
Is more than all the universe beside.

We join their group ; for this, our privilege.

And now the hour draws near that we must part,—
Fond hearts, alas ! must surely part on earth,—
The sacrificial hour is drawing near,
The central hour of Earth's sad history.

"Now is my soul sore troubled," cries the Lord,
"What say I ? Father save me from this hour ?
But for this hour I came into the world.
O Holy Father, glorify thyself!"

Hark ! From the heavenly heights a voice sounds forth !

“I have both glorified, and yet again
Will glorify myself in Thee.”

But men !

Alas ! Poor, sinful, weak, rebellious men
Bring deeper shame, and guilt more horrible,
Upon themselves and their posterity !
Yea, e'en the chosen few who love the Lord
How shamefully they fail him in his woe !

“ Yet, having loved, he loved them to the end.”
We gather for the sacred farewell feast
Of deepest meaning, tenderest purest love.
What other feast can be compared to this ?
The Paschal meal itself, from which it springs,
Commemorating God's delivering grace
From dire Egyptian bondage, and from death,
And typifying, by the sprinkled blood,
The good things yet concealed in mystery,
Could never move the hearts of men like this.

Most surely we approach the verge of Heaven !
And Heaven's own King sits with us at the board !
Our souls, transported from the things of sense
Lose sight of all but Him, and his dear love !
Oh, sweet ecstatic hour ! Oh, sacred pledge
Of love divine ! of God's eternal truth !
Oh, blessed company of those he loves !
Oh, sweet discourse ! like music to our souls !

And yet what sorrow mingles with our bliss !
How great the price of this most precious feast
Proud Cleopatra's costly pearl, dissolved,
In ostentation, vain, of vast expense,
Was but a worthless stone, and added naught
Save folly more perverse, and wickedness
To grace the pomp of her voluptuous meal.
But oh, behold, when Jesus breaks the bread,
And pours the wine for each beloved friend !
And list his wondrous words,

“Take ye, and eat.
This is my body which is given for you.
Oft as ye eat this bread remember me.”

O gracious Lord ! how can we e'er forget ?
But lo ! He now extends the cup to me,
And while I stretch my trembling hand to take,

“Drink of this cup. ’Tis the New Testament
In my own blood. ’Tis freely shed for you.
Oft as ye drink this cup remember me.”

O sacred memory ! Forever dwell,
Within the holiest temple of my heart,
This precious token of a Saviour’s love !
Be all things else forgot, before the name
The precious name of Jesus spends its power !
Sweet are the names of fond and happy love,
That thrill our longing souls with pure delight,
Of father, mother, brother, sister, child,
And that dear name, above all earthly names,

Of precious wife, our soul's chief counterpart :
 Yet even these must from our mem'ry fade,
 While that sweet name shall cheer us last on earth
 That first shall bless our raptured souls in Heaven.

But lo ! E'en in this sacred, happy feast
 Foul sin intrudes ! Oh ! Height of villany !

What horror fills our hearts ! And each one cries
“Lord, is it I ?”

Oh, may this question thrill
 Through every heart not fully sealed for Christ,
 Yet ask it right : for e'en the Traitor asked,
“Lord, is it I ?”

Oh, better, better far,
 The wretch had never lived than sell his Lord !
 Oh, dreadful power of Satan ! Heinous crime
Of loving filthy lucre more than God !

But Judas soon withdraws : and o'er our hearts
 There falls the shadow of the coming woe.

Yet, ere it bursts, our Lord sweet comfort speaks.

*“Let not your hearts be troubled : ye believe
 In God ; believe ye, even so, in me.”*

He turns his eyes towards Heaven, and lifts our
 thoughts

Above the rising tide of grief and fear.
 All earthly hopes dissolve and joys decay,
 He points us to the endless joys of Heaven.

Ah, great our need of this dear comfort now.
A company of strong, yet simple men,
With hearts refined by holiest intercourse
With One too pure for Earth, our love has grown,
Insensibly, through every day and hour.
Forsaking all things else on Earth held dear,
We cling to Him alone, and find in Him
All that a loving soul can most desire,
Wisdom, and righteousness, and truth, and love.

And now, in parting, sorrow fills our hearts.
How sweet, how tender is his last discourse!
We drink in every word with love and hope!
Upon the holy Mount he first began
To teach the principles to guide our life,
And now he shows the source of life divine,
Our promised Helper, and our Comforter;
And points us to the bright and blessed end.

We look at his fair forehead through our tears
(Serene and beautiful, as that of one
Familiar with the holy light of Heaven),
And vainly try to choke our rising grief.
The glow of youthful manhood on his cheeks
Declares him truly friend and brother man.
And so our yearning hearts still fondly say
Bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh is he.
But in his eyes, so full of tenderness,
We see a light that penetrates our souls,
And speaks a spirit heavenly,—yea, divine!

Believe in thee! Lord, how could any doubt?
Our hearts respond,

“Yea, Lord, we do believe.”

O Jesus, if we may not trust in Thee,
Purest and best of all humanity,
In whom, then, may we trust?
If thou couldst falsely point the way to Heaven,
Showing thyself the true and living way,
Then must our souls forevermore despair.

He speaks. Oh, listen!

“In my Father’s house
Are many mansions; if it were not so
I would have told you. I go to prepare
A place for you. And surely as I go
I come again, to take you to myself,
That where I am ye too may also be.
Whither I go ye know. The way ye know.”

Like balm these words of comfort soothe our grief,
Yet still, with deepest feelings all awake,
Attention most intense, and thrilling hope,
We questions urge (concerning Christ himself,
And that great life he came to bring mankind)
Which only Christ can solve.

Thus Thomas says
“We know not ‘whither’ Lord. How then the way?”

Then he

“I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE,
None cometh to the Father but by me.”

Lo! Ye who seek the secret springs of life,
Here find your problem solved! Here ends our
quest!

The truest, highest life is found in Christ!

The light of nature like a glow worm gleams;
But in the WORD OF GOD our souls find light,
A worldly life an *ignis fatuus* proves.

Eternal life must come from Christ alone.

Behold the Living Fount! What life can spring
From nothingness and death, save at the call
Of Him who caused the smitten rock to flow?
And whence can *true life* flow except from Him,
The Eternal Fount, supreme, of truth and life?
And how can men find life save in the ways
Provided and appointed by the Lord,
The chosen channels of his grace divine!

List ye, who travel by some other way,
And trust, with vainest confidence, in self,
How will ye come before Him at the last?
If Jesus e'en were false, how could ye stand
Before the Judge that searcheth every heart
And, unbefriended and alone, attempt
To plead your innocence of every sin
And claim the right to dwell "with saints in light?"
But if ye own that Jesus Christ is true,
What answer can ye give that ye have scorned
"The Holy One of God," his "Only Son?"
And ye who long to find the living God,
And walk the only way that leads to Heaven;

Ye who would learn the one essential truth,
And live the only true and blessed life,
Learn from our Lord's most precious parting words.
"I leave you peace. My peace I give to you."
All worldly joys are but the bubbles bright,
That sparkle on the surface of the stream,
And every moment vanish, one by one.
The peace of Christ is like the stream itself
That seeks the ocean of eternal bliss.

And now behold the dreadful hour is come,
The power of darkness and the wrath of God !
The wrath of God, forever due to sin,
Is, in its anguish for a moment laid
Upon the Well Beloved Son of God !

The world is full of sorrow, pain, and death,
Heart breaking grief, and desolating woe.
The cherished idols, reared by worldly hearts
In place of God, can yield no lasting joy.
Shattered at last, they crush their worshippers.
But e'en the death of hope to broken hearts
Brings no such woe as that which shrouds the soul
That bears the guilt and shame of human sin !
The righteous man who scorns dishonesty,
Imprisoned for another's crime, and scorned
By all his fellow men (e'en by the base
Who glory o'er his shame), more keenly feels
His deep disgrace, than wretches justly doomed.
He loathes the things in which their souls rejoice.
And though his soul may cry aloud to God,

“Prove me, and I shall still come forth like gold,”
The very shadow of the crime he hates
Darkens his soul, and blights his every joy.

But oh, how feebly this doth symbolize
The anguish of the Saviour’s holy soul ;
For not the deep disgrace, nor e’en the wrong,
Received from those who paid his love with hate,
Was heaviest burden in his load of woe.
'Twas sin itself (the burden of our sins,
He bore in his own body on the tree)
Which in The Garden crushed his tender heart.

Oh, dreadful sin ! that desolates the world !
Worse than disease, or sorrow, pain or death !
These (if but brief and wholesome chastisements
To purge from sin) may work our highest weal.
But sin doth separate from God himself,
And must forever bar the soul’s return.
It kills each holy joy that flows from God,
And steeps the soul at last in endless night.
It is “the dreadful thing that God doth hate,”
And holy beings hate, yea, even loathe.
“Fools make a mock at sin.” Yea, foulest sins,—
E’en blasphemies against the living God,
“They roll, as morsels sweet, beneath their tongues.”
But holy souls, convinced of smallest sins,
Are filled with penitence, and grief, and gloom.
Nor for themselves alone ; for those they love
(Deceived by sin) they mourn with grief and fear,
And share their burdens and their deep disgrace.

Conceive the sorrow of that parent's heart
Whose every child has turned aside to sin!

Yet every type must fail to fully show
The Saviour's agony beneath our sins.
What he hath suffered in his holy soul,
Dissevered for a moment from his God,
And burdened with the sins of all the world,
What tongue can tell? what sinful mind conceive?
We only know how fully he atoned
For all our guilt, to make salvation sure,
And free, as sure, to all who trust in him.

The final hour of sweet communion past,
With earthly friends, the Saviour leads them forth
And in the shades of sad Gethsemane,
He bids them watch. Shall we not watch awhile?

We may not know the burden of his thoughts.
Oh, let us mourn at least in sympathy.

The gloomy prospect all before him lies
Of quickly coming woes he may not shun.
He sees himself on trial for his life,
Surrounded by a rabble fierce and wild,
Like hungry wolves, loud howling for his blood.
The fickle multitude that lately joined
The loud hosannas of his loving friends,
More loudly voice the cool malignant hate
Of frowning priests, and canting Pharisees,
Whose deep hypocrisy, at his rebuke,
Stood out revealed in all its heinousness,

Like Satan touched by bright Ithuriel's spear.
He sees proud Satan's hellish triumph now,
Himself the victim to the slaughter led,
“Despised, rejected by his fellow men,”
Forsaken by his dearest earthly friends,
Most shamefully denied, with perjured oaths,
By him who promised most of faithful love,
Yea, e'en betrayed with hellish wickedness,
By one, his own disciple, honored high
With trusted office in the chosen band,
One who had heard his precious words of truth
From day to day, and bowed with him in prayer,
And at the festal board had dipped his hand
Into the self same dish! Alas! Alas!
That such a man should vile and recreant prove,
And sell himself to Satan for a price!
Ah, can we wonder at the Saviour's grief?
But hark! He speaks!

How touching are his words
In which he owns the travail of his soul!

“*Exceeding sorrowful! E'en unto death!*”

Oh, let our hearts respond! “He bears our griefs,”
“He carries,” friends, “our sorrows,” in his heart!

“*Exceeding sorrowful!*”

What mean these words
Forced from the lips of our long-suffering Lord?
No feeble tongue can tell, nor symbols show
The anguish, which excreciating death

Alone could speak, or end.

Oh, is't for me

Such dreadful sorrow fills my Saviour's soul ?

Oh, let me also grieve for mine own sins !

In my repenting spirit may he see

“The travail of his soul,” well “satisfied !”

The guilt and sorrow of a sinful world,

With all its gloom rests in his tender heart.

The “shadow of great darkness” wraps him in,

A sense of clinging guilt, though not his own,

With loathing horror fills his holy soul.

But one more bitter cup awaits his lips.

Oh, bitterest of all ! But must he drink ?

Behold him prostrate in the dreadful gloom

Of nature’s darkest night. ’Tis not the shade

That falls from friendly olives, dense, and deep,

That casts this dreadful gloom along his path.

Behold his form, convulsed with agony,

Stretched prone upon the ground in earnest prayer !

He sheds great drops of blood that fall to earth !

Could nature’s night alone work woe like his ?

Alas ! Not this, not this could cloud his soul.

To him the night was joyous as the day.

It brought him nearer to the God he loved !

But now he knows that God must hide his face,

And leave him, at the last, to die alone !

Hark ! Hear his prayer in anguish offered up,

“O Holy Father, if ’tis possible

Remove this cup. But if it may not pass
Except I drink, thy will, not mine, be done.”

What cup more bitter could the Saviour drink,
To fill his heart and soul with keenest woe,
Than this, to be forsaken of his God,
The God he loves, and in whose light he lives?
And this, too, in his hour of greatest need!

Oh, dreadful consequence of human guilt!
That God’s own Son must bear the Father’s frown,
And be, for sin, thus banished from his sight,
Yea, e’en in death!—the dreadful gloom of death!

Christ takes the sinner’s place, and drinks his cup,
His bitter cup, that cannot pass away.
A holy God can never smile on sin,
E’en when ’tis borne by his beloved Son.
Sin must forever separate from God.
Death cannot dwell with life, nor night with day.

These woes lie open to the Saviour’s view,
But ye who see the glorious victory
May wonder at his agony, and ask,
“What of the glory, and the bliss beyond?
Are they invisible, or all unknown?”

We own the mystery: but this we know,
Our condescending Lord has fully shared
Our human weakness, e’en from infancy.
Taking our place, “thus it behooved” the Lord
To suffer as a truly human soul.

• 'Tis easy for the Father to conceal,
A little while, the glory yet to come,
And put his chosen to the utmost test.
So deals he still with us, and sometimes hides
His loving count'nance that our souls may feel
The wretchedness and woe of life unlit
By his blest presence and heart cheering smiles.
(Far better sunless day, or starless night!)
What then of those who, now forsaking God,
Must find themselves forsaken at the last,
And all his favor lost forevermore?
Forgotten by the world, and earthly friends,
They wake at last to find, too late, that God
Was more than all they ever sought on earth.

Slow wears away this dreadful night of gloom
• And dimmest dawn first faintly tints the sky,
To usher in the still more dreadful day,
When, lo! approaching lights shine through the
gloom!

Lanterns and smoking torches, borne aloft,
Show gleaming weapons! List! A burst of noise
Dispels the sacred stillness of the place!

And there! among the hardened soldiery
See Judas stand! O worst of all the crew!

"Whom seek ye?" saith the Lord.

They answer him,

"Jesus of Nazareth,"

Then

"I am he."

Backward they move and fall upon the ground.
But Judas, bold with long acquaintancehip,
Steps forth,

“ Hail Master”

Cries, and *kisses him!*

Oh, meanest! basest! most atrocious crime
E'er witnessed in this world's sad course of sin!
A simple kiss! yet worse than dagger thrust
In Caesar's heart, or e'en than Cain's foul blow,
That laid a loving brother low in death!
Yea, worse than Adam's great apostacy,
That plunged a world in sin, and death and woe!
Did Satan e'er attempt a greater crime?
With cool premeditation he betrays
Him whom he owns as Master, Friend, and Lord!
And by the token of affection shows
His captors (oh, most foul hypocrisy!)
Him whom, they, ordered, all unknowing, seek.
Ah! can he think thus to deceive his Lord?
Already has that Lord his coming told,
“ He that betrayeth me is now at hand.”
And now he asks,

“ Friend, wherefore art thou come?
Judas, betrayest thou the Son of Man
E'en with a kiss? ”

Oh, could our trembling lips
Enjoy that most exalted privilege
By Judas so abused, to give the kiss
Of purest filial, reverential love,
“ Twould thrill us with ineffable delight!

But how explain this act of monstrous guilt
In one so highly favored of the Lord?
“Great is the mystery of godliness.”
“The mystery of sin” is also deep.
Yet may we draw this warning for ourselves,
That e'en in close communion with the Lord
We cannot be from danger wholly safe,
Until our hearts are purely, wholly his!
We cannot God and Mammon jointly serve.
O Mammon! Thou hast murdered multitudes!
For he who, thoughtlessly, makes thee his god,
Soon dwarfs his soul to pigmy littleness,
Seeming to scorn it as a thing of naught,
Doubting its heirship to a life divine,
And pampering as supreme his fleshly frame,
His chosen god, e'en “glorying in his shame,”
And “minding earthly things,” his only heaven,
He finds, at last, his god but sordid dust,
His heaven a fleeting dream, his soul betrayed!
How many souls prefer thy gilded chains,
O Mammon, to the “glorious liberty”
With which Christ makes his children nobly free!
How many choose thy brief, uncertain joys,
Before the certainty of endless bliss!
How many prize thy wingéd riches here
Above the treasures of the “heirs of God!”

O fatal love of gold! thy subtle power
Makes fools of statesmen and philosophers,
Yea, e'en disciples of the lowly Christ

(So poor he had not where to lay his head),
By precept and example wisdom taught,
May still be blinded by the love of gold !

Deluded Judas ! Sold to Satan now,
What profiteth thy thirty silver bits ?
How brief the joy of thine ill-gotten gains !
How cheaply hast thou bargained all that's dear !
To sell thy Lord thou sellest also Heaven !
Thou sellest e'en thine own poor soul to Hell !
What dost thou gain by such a sacrifice ?
Thy Maker's dreadful wrath, the Devil's scorn,
The execration and contempt of men !
Incredible such folly seems to those
Who their own folly for a while forget,
Yea, searce might we believe, did not our eyes
Behold it every day ! Let each soul pause,
And ponder well this thought,

Am I more wise ?

Have I, to any earthly idol given
The place in mine own heart that Christ should
hold,
And sold my Lord at any paltry pree,
To banishment from Lordship o'er my soul ?

But look ! The soldiers lay their hands on Christ !
Lo ! zealous Peter, drawing quick his sword,
With "Master, shall I smite ?" waits not reply,
But confident in Christ's supporting power,
Counting no odds, at Malchus aims his stroke.

Quick turning, he evades a deadly wound,
Losing his ear. Our Lord, with majesty,
Says

“Put up now thy sword into his sheath,
For they that take the sword, die by the sword.”

Precepts of peace, and love to enemies,
Christ always taught.

He now exemplifies.

He needs no aid like this; for, at his call,
Twelve legions strong of spirits quick would come.
He needs no sword to speed his loving rule;
Its motto true the advent angels sang,
“Glory to God, and peace, good will to man.”
His spirit’s sword is but the Word of God.

But those who looked to Christ to use his power
To scatter enemies and save his friends,
Are, at his strange submission, filled with fear.
With sudden panie they forsake the Lord,
“Like sheep without a shepherd scattered wide.”

Left friendless Christ is now a prisoner led,
Abandoned to the desperate rage of foes.
But two that love him follow him afar.
Another, seized, escapes, but leaves his cloak,
Three chosen ones, who on the holy Mount
And in the Garden, in the agony,
E'er clung the closest of the little band.
The two in darkness follow, with the crowd,
E'en to the High Priest’s palace. John, well known,

Long time a dweller at Jerusalem,
Obtains admittance from the portress maid.
The Galilean Peter stands without.
But John entreats admission for his friend.
The door is opened. Entering in the hall,
He sits, among the servants, by the fire,
Chilled by the vigils of the night. But lo!
The maid, who looks intently on his face,
Lit by the ruddy glancing light, exclaims,
“Thou, too, wert also with him!”

He replies,

“Nay, woman, I was not!”
Ah! coward words!
A little while, and now still others say,
“Thou, too, art one of them.”

Still he denies,

E'en with an oath.

“*I do not know the man!*”

O Peter! List the cock!

He tells the hour

Of coming day. How little dreameth he
That, in the wondrous providence of God,
His voice is timed to warn thee of thy sin!
Hast thou so soon forgot? This is indeed
The hour of darkness, and of Satan's power!

Still others now, with Malchus' cousin, come,
And say,

“Most surely thou art also one.
Thou art a Galilean. And thy speech

Bewrayeth thee."

But still more earnestly,
Peter, beginning now to curse and swear,
Denies, and says,

"*I do not know the man!*"

For shame! O man! Be true, for very shame!
List Peter! Once again, the crowing cock!

And see the Lord himself! He turns on thee
A look so sad, so full of meek reproach,—
It says,

"Rememberest thou my prophecy?"

Fair reader, wilt thou venture to condemn
With sterner judgment trembling Peter's fault?
We own its baseness, and its cowardice;—
But here our human nature stands revealed!

Nay! Say not we forget the heroes bold,
Who for their country offered up their lives,
Brave Coelus at the bridge, or Scaevela
Thrusting his hand unshrinking in the flames.
We praise the brave. Our very hearts are thrilled
By deeds of lofty valor in the fight.

But Peter too was brave, when with his Lord.
Let Malchus testify, with all his friends!
Or see him venturing on the stormy deep!
What bravest mortal ever ventured more?
But ah! 'Twas when, in all humility,
He first had prayed,

"My Master, bid me come!"

Twas in Christ's power he walked ; and when his
faith

Began to waver, he began to sink.

But when in self he trusted, boasting loud,

Of courage and devotion, though sincere,

He learned in bitterness the lesson hard,

The weakness of his flesh !—his need of grace !

Presume not then on any natural strength.

From precept and example learn thy need.

And take thou heed ne'er to deny thy Lord,

In any scoffing, godless company !

That look of meek reproof pierced Peter's heart.

Ah ! Grieved, and humbled now, he hastens forth,

And in the porch pours forth his soul in tears,

Hot tears of deepest shame, and bitterest grief.

But tears are weak to tell the torture keen

That rends the poor disciple's loving heart.

We almost hear the outcry of his soul !

We almost feel its throbbing agony !

“Oh, wretch of wretches ! How shall I redeem

My tarnished honor in my Master's eyes ?

Where ? my vile head, in self abasement, hide ?

What penance may I do ? Alas ! Alas !

That I should boast so high ! should sink so low !

That in this hour, when my beloved Lord

So needs a friend, I should his name deny !

Alas ! that I another pang should add . . .

E'en to the speechless anguish of his soul !

O Satan, must I call thee to avenge
My Master's wrong upon my guilty soul ?
No! No! Too great thy foul advantage now,
My Master's warning rings within my heart.
I seem e'en now to hear his gentle voice,
“Simon ! Simon ! Satan hath desired
To have thee, and to sift thy soul as wheat ;
But I have prayed for thee, thy faith fail not.”
And shall I nevermore on earth obtain
Pardon and benediction of my Lord ?
Is this the last farewell ? Is this the end
Of all the sweet communion, glorious hope,
And daily blessing of the years now sped ?
Be this the end at least of mortal pride.
Henceforth in constant penitence I spend
The few remaining years of withered life.”

That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. Heb. ii. 14, 15.

The
Book
of
Sin
and
Death

Crucified the Lord of Glory
Killed the Prince of Life

Act III

PROEM.

How shall we conquer death?
Restraining tears? Subduing every groan?
Dismissing thought? And stifling every moan,
And summoning our fortitude alone,
Shall we resign our breath?

Ah! this were vain pretense!
Oh, let the savage act the part of lies,
Who at the very stake his foe defies.
His look of triumph all within denies,—
Each quivering sense.

Stern death we cannot cheat!
To feign a triumph that we do not feel,
While his benumbing fingers o'er us steal
To still our hearts, and fast our eyelids seal,
Is folly, and deceit.

We need a higher power,
When all the brightness of this life is past
And Satan's toils around our souls are cast,
To break the fetters of a power so vast,
And cheer the dying hour.

We need the help of One,
Full able to destroy the hellish foe,
Who yields, to save our souls from death and woe,
His own beloved bosom to the blow,
And conquers all alone.

BOOK FIFTH.

The appointed day, reluctant, now arrives,
Most awful day on which the sun e'er smiled!—
A feeble, sickly smile, forboding woe!
O patient sun! How canst thou smile again?
O red-eyed morn! How canst thou now array
Thyself, this day, in robes of rosy light?
How canst thou still with faithful fingers dress
All nature in her daily loveliness,
That should be vailed in blackest weeds of woe?
Still beautiful in grief, thou lookest down
On scenes more fit for deepest midnight gloom!

The glorious Son of Heaven's Almighty King,
Before whose throne the mightiest seraphs bend
With deepest reverenee, most adoring love,
Before whom, sometime every knee shall bow
Of things in Heaven, on Earth, and 'neath the
Earth,
Is now arraigned before a human court!
A court unjust, of bitterest enemies,
Already pre-determined to condemn,
Yea, buying his betrayal with a bribe!
A filthy bribe, whieh they themselves decide
Unfit to cast into the treasury.

But forms of justice still must be observed,
And suborned witnesses are brought, to show,
By testimony false, some heinous crime

Deserving death. But still they wholly fail.
But two at length appear to testify
Some speech against the Temple of the Lord.

“Destroy this temple,” said the Saviour once,
Concerning their premeditated crime,
“And I will build it up within three days.”
These words his foes are willing to pervert,
But fail to make their witnessing agree.

But now the High Priest speaks to Christ, himself.
Oh, contrast strange! The priest in splendid robes,
And lofty tiara, with visage stern,
In his own palace, seated on a throne,
Attended by his guards, and honored high,
With reverence profound, by those who stand
Within his august presence, ready all
To trust his word, and execute his will.
Before him, lo! the humble Nazarene!
Lone standing, dressed in meek simplicity!

“What of thyself, and doctrine?”

Cries the priest.

He answers clear,

“I e'er spake openly
In synagogue and temple day by day,
Whither the Jews resort. Why, then, ask me?
Ask them who heard me speak, what I have said.”

Now seek thy witnesses against the Lord.
But lo! a zealous minion of the priest,
Advaneing smites him with the open palm.

“What? Answerest thou the High Priest so?” he cries.

But calm, beneath this foul indignity,
Christ answers,

“If I aught of evil spoke,
Bear witness of the evil, but if good,
Why smitest thou then me?”

These words alone
Rebuke the rude, outrageous insolence.
The judge’s silence but endorsed the wrong.

But now the High Priest asks the Lord again,

“I now adjure thee by the living God!
Tell me the truth! Art thou the Son of God?”

Oh, solemn words! The truth he taught before,
In sermons and in conversations oft,
He now is called to testify on oath.

Nor does the Lord deny the wondrous truth.
Affirming it in life, he testifies,
By solemn oath, in view of pending death,
And dies, a *martyr to the sacred truth!*

He first rebukes the unbelief of men
Whom no plain utterance from the Lord himself
Could e’er convince—no proof could satisfy—
Thus,

“If I tell you, ye will not believe.”
But to the High Priest’s question he replies,

“I AM.

And ye shall see the Son of Man
Sit on the right hand of the power of God,
And coming in the very clouds of Heaven.”

The High Priest rends his garments, crying out,

“He speaketh blasphemies!

What further need
Have we of witnesses? Your judgment give!”

They all exclaim at once,

“Guilty of death!”

Their awful verdict echoes through the world.

It must re-echo till the end of time!

And yet—if Christ were false,—

His doom were just!

He who could live a lie most blasphemous,

And, in the dread solemnity of death,

Could swear the same before the living God.

If false in fact, were false in heart and soul!

Or if deceived, were so deceived by Hell.

’Tis thought by fools, that Christ was lunatic.

No wise man calls him thus, of friends or foes,

Nor does his life show trace, in word or deed,

Of mental weakness or incompetency.

Attempting nothing he could not perform,

And uttering naught of foolish wild conceit.

His life was “holy, harmless, undefiled,”

His wisdom practical, while most profound.

But what the mental character of him,
Who, in full view of Christ's most wondrous life,
And all the prophecies fulfilled in him,
And faith of millions saved by him from sin,
Would shun a right conclusion, wise, and good,
For empty unsupported theory ?
Or what of those who deem the verdict just,
And only call the sentence too severe ?

This judgment rests upon his outward guise.
A plain and rough-clad man, he seems no more,
While now an unresisting captive led.

“But not according to appearance judge,”
These were his words, “but righteous judgment
give.”

And have they now forgot his mighty deeds ?
Nay, but their own interpretation give,
As, “by Beelzebub he casteth out
Foul spirits,” and “he could not be of God
Because he keepeth not the Sabbath day.”
Nay, e'en when Lazarus issued from the tomb,
They plotted all the more to end his work
(And Lazarus too they purposed to destroy).
They said among themselves,

“ What shall we do ?

For this man worketh many miracles,
And soon all will believe, and foes will come,
And e'en our place and nation take away.”

'Twas then Caiaphas gave this counsel sage,
Whose deepest meaning he himself knew not.

“It is expedient that one should die,
And that the very nation perish not.”

A foul expediency, most unjust,
Controls their minds, and guides their fell decree.

Ah! feared they more the judgments of their God,
Less would they fear the fury of their foes.
The doom they feared, God’s righteous judgments
bring.

“The hidden wisdom of the sons of God,”
These haughty “princes of the world know not,
For did they know, they would not crucify
The Lord of glory,” their own promised king.

From principles of worldly policy,
Opposed to those of faith and piety,
May God deliver all his children true.
Ah, wiser far, far-seeing faith in God,
And safer, all the paths of righteousness.

But wild infatuation rules the hour.
The Devil triumphs, making fools of men,
To cast his hellish insults on their king.
Blinded themselves by sin, and Satan’s art,
They blindfold him! They buffet with their fists!
Oh, dreadful sacrilege! Oh, cruel hate!
Apollyon in his dark concealment laughs,
While guardian angels scarce restrain their tears!
Ah! how doth God withhold his thunderbolts?
Infinite love, and wisdom all divine
Alone could bear the base indignity.

The children of the Devil have their way,
Revile their Lord with foulest mockery,
Smite with their palms, e'en spit upon his face,
And bid him

“Prophesy, who smiteth thee.”

Ah! did they know how Christ doth read their
hearts,
And knows them all, the willing slaves of sin,
How would their eoward souls dissolve with fear!
How doth their conduct openly betray
Their seeret hearts at enmity to God.
They would not dare defy God's *wrath* revealed;
But lo! incarnate *goodness*, in their power,
They deem the proper obejt of their hate.

Their dread deeree they dare not execute,
Yet seek the sanction not of God but man.
To Pilate's bar they lead their injured Lord.

* * * * *

Unconsciously the Roman governor
Awaits the crucial hour that seals his fate,
And blasts his name with endless infamy.
O dreadful billow on the sea of time,
That lifts before the world his worthless name,
Forevermore the synonym of shame!
O hateful tyranny of previous guilt,
Constraining guilty souls to crimes they dread!
He longs for honor from his fellow men,
Yet links his name with murd'rous priests and
scribes,
Despised and hated in his inmost soul,—

Yea, links it with the Traitor's branded name,
As one, who, in the hall of judgment gives
To ignominious death the innocent,
Whom his own lips pronounce without a fault !
Proud of his name and lineage, he aspires
To loftier heights of glory and renown.
In Herod's palacee, he, a Roman knight,
Elated sees his growing fame and power.
The unwonted splendor dazzles every sense.
Pillars and fountains, vast extended halls,
And tessalated pavements, laid with stones
Of marble, agate, and of lazuli,
And ceilings rich with cedar, decked with gold,
And chambers filled with richest gems of art,
And servants hastening at his every beck,
And iron-hearted soldiers for his guards,
All these conspire to fill his heart with pride.
He deems himself a hero, dreaming oft
Such pomp and splendor soon shall be his own.

Vain dreams ! He seeks not first the gift of God
Rewarding virtue, faith, and righteousness,
Justice towards men, and piety towards God,
With strong fidelity to truth and right.
Were these his principles when trial comes,
He could not hesitate in selfish doubt,
Nor, like a coward, palter with his foes.
A glorious opportunity were his
To learn the truth, and recognize his Lord,
And, by a just decree, to write his name

With Christ's, in endless glory, and renown.
But base expediency guides his acts,
And plunges into deep perplexity,
Yea, into crime, and judgments following guilt!

But hark! What tumult now demands his care?
Men of the highest rank approach his gates,—
A noisy rabble following at their heels,—
And leading in a prisoner to the court.
Yet they, the leaders, will not enter in,—
Vain hypocrites,—lest they should be defiled!
Though all their souls are foul with blackest guilt!
So, first, the Governor goes forth to them,

“What accusations bring ye 'gainst this man?”

Thus Pilate, bold, demands, with much contempt
Of Jewish superstitions, forms, and laws.
Yet he would fain remit this cause to them.

“Take him, and try according to your law.”

In vain! Eternal wisdom has decreed
That Christ must die, and by a death accursed,—
Thus to redeem our sin-cursed souls, “be made
A curse for us,” for so his word declares,
“Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”
’Twas taught by ancient symbols—Lifted up,
Behold the serpent cursed by God and man,
Yet giving life to all who look in faith!

And Christ declared, “So must the Son of Man
Be lifted up,” and David prophesied

The rage of beastly men against their Lord,—
 Their very words of bitter hate and scorn,
 “He trusted on the Lord,”—their very deeds,
 “They pierced my hands and feet.”

Lo ! Pilate now !

The guilty, yet unwilling instrument !
 Yet not constrained (O mystery profound !)
 By any impulse from a power divine
 (The very thought revolting, and absurd),
 Reluctant now, he feels the galling chains
 Which Satan round his guilty captives casts,
 So leading them to deeper depths of crime,
 From which their shuddering souls shrink back in
 vain !

But priests and scribes, inflamed with hellish fire,
 Pretending sanctity, and zeal for God,
 “Like roaring, and fierce ravening lions,” rage,
 And “gape upon him with their mouths,” in hate.

Pilate retires, and in the judgment hall
 He asks the Lord,

“King of the Jews art thou ?”

Christ answers,

“Askest thou this thing thyself,
 Or else did others tell it thee of me ?”
 Art thou sincere,—a seeker after truth ?
 Or questioning of charges base and false ?
 “Am I a Jew ?” He scornfully replies.
 “Thy nation hath delivered thee to me.
 What hast thou done ?”

“ My kingdom,” saith the Lord,
“ Is not of this world, else my sons would fight.”

“ Art thou a king then ?”

“ As thou sayest. A King !

To this end was I born, and for this cause
I came into this world, that I should bear
My witness to the truth, and every one,
Who is a child of truth, doth hear my voice.”

“ What is the truth ?”

Proud Pilate lightly asks,
But waits not Christ’s reply. He plainly shows
That he himself is not a child of truth ;
Yet knows at least that Christ is innocent
Of crimes so falsely charged, and hastens forth
His judgment to declare to those without.
He does not know the opportunity
He lightly throws away.

’Tis ever thus
With those that do not willingly receive
“ The love of God that they might thus be saved.”

Fresh accusations greet the Governor’s ears,
But Jesus silent stands, without a word,
E’en as a “ harmless lamb to slaughter led,
Or as a sheep before her shearers dumb,”
He hears it all, but “ openeth not his mouth.”

Now Pilate marvels greatly,

“ Hear’st thou not
How many things ’gainst thee they testify ? ”

But to the priests and people he declares,

“I find no fault in him.”

At once they cry,

“From Galilee e'en to this holy place

He stirreth up the people !”

Aye ! 'Tis true !

From lethargy, from worldliness, and sin—

“Seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness.”

To make himself an earthly king ?

How false !

But Pilate, glad to hear of Galilee,

Sends him forthwith, to Herod Antipas,—

A wretch most vile and dissolute, though king.

The tyrant hopes to see some miracle,—

Deeming a juggler honored to perform

Before a king ! Oh, vain, absurd conceit !

And so he questions him in many words,

While vehemently priests and scribes accuse.

The Lord disdains to answer him a word !

Offended now, he sets his Lord at naught,

And mocking, with his soldiers, sends him back,

Clothed with a purple robe, to Pilate's court.

Thus buffeted and bandied to and fro,

His “soul exceeding filled with deep contempt,”

His love requited with the bitterest hate,

The patient sufferer waits to hear his doom.

His very judge now pleads for his release !
Proclaiming, once again, his innocence,
As also uncondemned at Herod's court.
In vain ! The Prince of Darkness rules the hour,
Determined that the Prince of Life shall die.
Now, at this feast, the custom grants release
To such a prisoner as the people ask.
A blood-stained desperado lies in bonds
And waits his righteous doom. But priests persuade
The hesitating people to demand
That e'en a robber, and a murderer,
Should now escape, nor Jesus be released !

“What, then,” says Pilate, “shall we do with
Christ?”

Satanic fury fills the gathered crowd.
Their voices loud and angry rend the air
With,
“Crucify ! Away with such a man !”
“Away with such a fellow from the earth !”

“But why ?” he pleads,
“What evil hath he done ?”
But more exceedingly they cry aloud,
“Away ! Away ! Let him be crucified !”

Then Pilate hoping to escape the guilt,
And troubled in his mind by warning dreams
Of Claudia, his wife, yet willing still
To pacify the people, water takes,

Washing his hands in presence of them all,
Proclaiming,

“I, at least, am innocent
Of this most just man’s blood. See ye to it.”

Ah! vain the thought! By outward forms to cleanse
That stain indelible, which all the seas
Or powers on earth can never wash away!—
Naught but the cleansing blood itself,
Received by faith in truest penitence!

Now hear the dreadful curse these men invoke!
“His blood on us, and on our children be!”

Through Heaven and deepest Hell, through all the
earth,
Through all succeeding ages echoing goes
This awful malediction on their race!
And shuddering history trembles to record
The deeds of blood and desolation wrought,
In answer and fulfilment of their prayer.

Oh, dreadful depths of ruin, guilt, and woe,
Where Satan captive leads his willing dupes,
Blinded by fury, folly, lust, or greed!

Now Pilate binds the victim fast with cords,
And bids the lictors bring the dreadful scourge,
Whose leatherne thongs, knotted with metal points
Draw blood at every stroke, and tear the flesh!

Oh, hideous torture; Lord how canst thou bear,
Patient and silent still, such shame and pain?

The barbarous soldiers now, with fiendish glee,
Conduct the bleeding sufferer to their hall,
And gather all the band to join their sport.
They strip and clothe him with the purple robe,
They place a reed for sceptre in his hand,
A crown of platted thorns upon his head.
In foulest mockery they bow the knee.

“King of the Jews rejoice! All hail!” They cry,
They spit upon him, smite him with the reed,
And, mocking still, pretend to worship him!

O patient Heaven ! How long, O Lord, how long ?
Shall men like beasts, like furious fiends of Hell,
E'en worse than devils dare, defy thy wrath ?
“ Why standest thou far off, O Lord, my strength ?
Oh, haste to help ! Deliver from the sword !
Thy darling from the power of the dog ! ”

And canst thou, Jesus, stoop so low to man ?
Canst thou submit to such indignities ?
Why dost thou not in judgment speak the word
To blast thy foes e'en like yon withered fig ?

Patience ! Not yet, not yet the time arrives !
Not till the work is finished, judgment o'er,
A righteous judgment passed, and souls are saved,
Redeemed, by Jesus, from eternal wrath.

“ Why do the heathen rage ? The people dream
Vain things ? The kings of earth array themselves,
The rulers counsel take against the Lord,

And his Anointed? ‘Let us break their bands,
And cast away from us their riven cords.’
He that abideth in the Heaven, doth laugh!
With deep derision he regards their rage.”

But grace not vengeance triumphs in this hour,
Kind pity for the multitudes misled,
Forbearance towards the worst and bitterest foes,
And yearning love to souls thus lost in sin!
'Tis love sustains and comforts Jesus' soul,
And love restrains the Father's burning wrath!
He views the triumph of his Son well pleased.
An “offering and a sacrifice to God,”
To save the guilty from the final wrath.

Oh, glorious triumph! Satan, baffled once,
As simple Tempter, offering subtle bribes,
Is conquered now! In vain he seeks to whelm
By brutal force, and thus subdue Christ's soul,
Or shake his perfect love and trust towards God,
Or taint his spirit with the smallest sin!
Blackest ingratitude and foulest wrong
Moved not his soul to passion or revenge!

But now, the mockery o'er, the cross prepared,
The Governor leads the royal victim forth,
Clad in his purple robe, and platted crown,
And cries,

“BEHOLD THE MAN!”

Oh, yes! “A man!”
In every fibre of his being tried.
And proved “a man,” in every manly grace,

In manly fortitude, and manly strength,
To bear the worst that malice could inflict,
And manly courage, standing up unawed
By priests or rabble, Governor, or King,
Yea, all alone, 'gainst Earth and Hell combined!
But more than manly in the perfect poise
Of all the higher virtues of the soul,
True dignity, with gentle meekness joined,
Deep hate of sin, with most forgiving love,
Patience sublime, that, with the mighty power
To crush the insulting foe, endures their wrath
To save their guilty souls from wrath of Heaven!

“BEHOLD THE MAN!”

The rightful King of men
Arrayed in mockery of his royal rights!
By sinful men rejected and despised,
But crowned with glory in the sight of Heaven
O crown of thorns! Thine every blood-stained point,
More precious than the diamonds of the earth,
Bespeaks God's love, begetting loyal love
In countless throbbing hearts of souls redeemed!

“Behold!” Ye priests of Zion's holy hill!
Oh, if your hearts are human, now behold
The sacred person of your “Christ,” abused!
Oh, see the trickling streams of David's blood
Flow from that brow of sacred majesty!
That blood-stained robe! It speaks the dreadful
scourge!
That kingly countenance, so pale and calm!

'Tis full of holiest love for sinful man !

Ah ! Should it kindle wrath in Judah's sons ?

Those eyes,—so full of grief,—should teach your eyes
To weep with pity for the Saviour's woes.

Melt not your hearts ? Has Satan full control ?

“BEHOLD THE MAN !”

Oh, spectacle of shame !

Shame, O ye monsters, clothed in sacred robes,
Pretended ministers of righteousness !

Ye hypocrites ! Ye speak of one true God,

And for pretence ye offer lengthy prayers.

Yet, destitute of all true love to God,

Ye hate the man who makes him manifest,
Because your nature vile, his words expose.

Your holy horror of his blasphemies,

Was secret triumph o'er a man ye feared,

Whom hitherto ye sought to trap in vain.

Ye feared his dread rebukes that pierced your souls,
And knew his power to hurl you from your place.

Ye children of the Devil in God's house,

Bold in your unbelief, ye throned yourselves,

And turned it to “a place of merchandise.”

Ye give the Master to the hands of foes.

Now when the foe himself some pity shows,

When e'en a Roman soldier sets him forth,

And by the silent plea “Behold the man,”

Would move you by the touching spectacle,

Your only answer to the soldier's plea

Once more is,

“CRUCIFY HIM ! CRUCIFY !”

Ye serpents! Hissing your contempt and hate,
Ye vip'rous brood, how can your souls escape
The just damnation of the Hell ye serve?

“BEHOLD THE MAN!” O Earth, behold the man,
Of all mankind the purest, noblest, best,
The friend of sinners, enemy of sin,
Yet now a spectacle to earth and Heaven,
Condemned of Hell, because the Son of God!

For Pilate says,

“Take ye, and erucify,
For I, in him, can find no fault at all.”

Now they confess the only fault they find.
“We have a law by which he ought to die,
In that he made himself

THE SON OF GOD!”

“THE SON OF GOD?”

At this e'en Pilate fears,
And enters, once again, the judgment hall.

“Whence art thou?”

Jesus answers not a word.

“Answerest thou not? Knowest not that I have
power
Either to crucify, or let thee go?”

Ah! Pilate. Thus condemnest thou thyself!

“No power against me couldst thou have at all,
Save what is given thee from above. For this
He that delivered me hath greater sin.”

Now Pilate seeks again to let him go.

In vain! They ery,

“If thou let this man go
Thou art not Cæsar’s friend.”

Now Pilate fears
The wrath of man more than the doom of sin.
He yields the guiltless prisoner to their wrath!
The die is cast! But still he throws a taunt
On those he fears, yet scorns.

“BEHOLD YOUR KING!”

Tumultuous shouts burst forth in hoarse response,

“Away with! Crucify him! Crucify!”

“What! Crucify your king!”

He pleads again
Half in defiant, angry mockery,
And half in pity for the innocent,—
Half ready to believe his righteous claims.

“We have no king but Cæsar!”

Loud they cry,
Rejecting their own David’s mighty Son.
And still loud voices cry out,

“Crucify!”

Alas! Behold the dreadful fruit of guilt!
The soul of man,—formed to delight in God,
To learn of him from all his wondrous works,
And as a polished mirror to reflect
His glorious image, growing more like God,—

By Adam's first transgression (deemed so small
By those who know not God, nor sin's dread power)
Forever alienated and estranged,
From whom it sprung, and unto whom
Its love and service are supremely due,
Has now become the willing instrument
Of Satan's malice 'gainst the King of Kings !
“The princes of the world knew not,” indeed,
“The hidden wisdom of the sons of God;”
For had they only recognized his might,
They had not dared to crucify their Lord.
Yet scarcely less the blackness of their guilt,
They not the less had hated truth divine,
God's holy law, his wise and just decrees,
And righteous judgments 'gainst uncancelled sin.
They clearly saw Christ's holy character,
And hated that which so condemned their own.
Nor character alone declared his truth ;
“For if I had not done,” our Lord declared,
“Among them, works which no man else had done,
They had not sinned, but now they have both seen
And hated me, yea, and my Father too.”

Behold the condemnation of the world!
Not Christ, not Christ is judged before high Heaven !
Themselves have men condemned, by word and deed.
Their condescending King, in human form,
In all his moral excellence arrayed,
Because he lays his threatening thunders by,
Is now by Israelite, and pagan scorned,—

By priest and people, governor, and king.
Behold the robe and crown which speak their shame,
Their hatred and rejection of their King!
“We will not have this man to reign o'er us.”

* * * * *

Alas! How different now yon going forth
From that triumphal entry four days since!
Rejoicing multitudes, with thrilling hope,
Eager to greet their longed-for earthly king,
With palms and garments strewed his upward way,
And shouting loud, as with one mighty voice,
With glad hosannas rent the ambient air.

“Joy to the Son of David! Blest be he
That cometh in the name of God, the Lord!”

Oh, ignominious change! Behold him now,
A prisoner led by hostile soldiery,
A hooting rabble following at his heels.
Down through the narrow street they make their
way,

The noble captive staggering 'neath his cross.
Anon the tidings spread. The crowds increase,
Some drawn by brutal curiosity
To see the dying throes of one condemned
To perish by an agonizing death,
Some led by blindest confidence in men,
Deeming the judgment of their priests divine,
Some with malicious triumph at the fall,
Or condemnation of a man whose life

Had so condemned their own, and some with rage
And disappointment that the one they deemed
Their long-desired Deliverer, Priest, and King,
Had proved a helpless lamb before his foes.

Others were led by truest sympathy,
And deepest sorrow for the one they loved.
Lo ! Yonder group of women, standing, wait,
With sad expectancy, the coming train.
They tremble with emotions far too deep
To utter forth at once, with boisterous grief.
But ah ! you saintly matron ! See, how pale !
How deadly pale ! How do her eyes bespeak
The grief, unspeakable by palsied tongue,
The anguish of a "soul a sword hath pierced!"
Her Son ! More dear than life, or soul itself !
Her King ! Her Christ ! Her true incarnate God !
Reverenced and loved with all her spirit's power,
She now beholds with malefactors led,
Arrayed in shame, and bowed beneath his cross !
Lo ! nature yields ! She falls ! She faints away !
And kind oblivion for a moment comes
To steal the anguish of a grief, so great
Her very heart might break beneath the blow.
Kind hands support and comfort her ! And oh,
What wings, invisible to mortal eyes,
Are those which speed to shield her stricken soul !

We lift our eyes ! See ! O'er this barbarous horde
Of sin-degraded men, urged on by hell,
The embattled hosts of Heaven ! In bright array

They stand, prepared to keep the Father's words,
Which Satan once had quoted to deceive
And tempt the Saviour to presumptuous sin.
“For I will give mine angels charge o'er thee
To keep thee,—with their hands to bear thee up,
Lest thou shouldst dash thy foot against a stone.”
No stone of stumbling trips his spirit's march.
No faltering faith, wav'ring of love, or trust,
Nor any yielding to one sinful thought
Mars the triumphal progress of the Lord.
Nor e'en does nature yield, until the cry
Of triumph—“IT IS FINISHED!—goes to Heaven.

But oh, what sorrow follows in that train !
Friends now attend, who, shaken in their faith,
Show, by their grief, their hearts, at least, are true
Manhood has not entirely died from earth ;
But tender-hearted woman leads the way.
Bewailing and lamenting women press
Close to the Lord they love. And now, relieved
By Simon, of the burden of his cross,
He turns,
“Ye daughters of Jerusalem
Weep not for me ! But for yourselves, oh, weep !
And for your children !”

He himself has wept,
Bewailing the Jerusalem he loved,
With clear foresight of this most dreadful sin,
And that tremendous doom this sin must bring.
E'en now he bears the sorrow in his heart.

Outside the holy city stands a hill,
Whose name, abhorrent, speaks of things unclean,
Yet destined to become, of all the earth,
The place most consecrated and most dear.
E'en Sinai, Bethel, or Moriah seem
Less holy, blest, or dear to loving hearts.

What depths of meaning now in Calvary!
Here God reveals himself, as ne'er before,
In forms of love, astounding our poor hearts:
From Sinai dreadful holiness shone forth.
Moses himself, before his glorious God,
Exclaimed, "Exceedingly I fear, and quake."
And all the people fled, and stood far off,
And said, "If God speak with us we must die."
But now, unfolded, lo! amazing love!
Before declared, but now indeed fulfilled,
Inviting penitents to come by faith,
And trust the Lord, e'en suffering death for us!
Thus glorious holiness no more alarms,
But seems more lovely e'en in sinful eyes.
But ah! 'tis here that human sin appears
More dreadful, far, than Sinai's thunders loud.

Here pause the blinded crowds to end the work
Of malice, dev'lish, yet most impotent.
Their final preparations now they make.
And, lying on his cross, with palms outspread,
The gentle Saviour waits the dreadful stroke!
And even while they crucify, he cries,
"Father forgive! They know not what they do!"

Oh, height of cruelty! With wicked hands
They pierce his hands and feet!—

Oh, depth of mystery! By sure decree
Of God's eternal wisdom 'twas ordained,
Ordained the free-will offering of God,—
The very time, and method of his death!
Well known the persons,—he who first betrayed,
He who condemned, and he who pierced with spear,
And all who join to swell the hellish rout;
Yea, spoken by most ancient prophecy
The very taunts so freely uttered now;
And clearly prophesied, and typified
The very deeds,—the casting of the lots,
The parting of his vesture at the cross!

But ah! not God compels, nor moves their wills!
'Tis sin and Satan only lead them on
Directly counter to God's righteous law,
Against his pleasure, 'gainst his loving heart
And every holy influence from above.

“Delivered by determinate decree,
And clear foreknowledge of Almighty God,
Most wicked hands now crucify and slay'
His well beloved Son. E'en at the cross
Most hellish malice, most malignant hate,
Derides his woe, and mocks his helplessness.

His foes now at their dying victim gloat.
They pass before his cross, and wag their heads

And say,

“If thou be truly Son of God,
Come down now from the cross. We will believe”

The thieves too cast the same into his teeth.

But one repents, and says,

“Remember me
When thou dost reach thy heavenly kingdom, Lord.”

How great the change! How full of mystery!

How great the faith! How gracious the response

“This day, with me, thou enterest Paradise!”

But haughty priests, and scribes, and elders mock,—

“In God he trusts. Let him deliver now

If he will have him for the Son of God.”

“Others he saved. Himself he cannot save.”

Nature at last revolts! Rebukes the crime!

And vails the noon-day sun with darkness deep!

For three long hours the dreadful gloom prevails.

At last, with dying anguish, Jesus cries,

“Eloi! Eloi! la-mah sabaelthani?”

“My God! Oh, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Again—“I thirst.”

A soldier wets his lips.

He breathes his final prayer,

“Father,”

He cries,

“Into thy hands my spirit I commend.”

Once more,

“ ‘Tis finished,’ ”

Bows his head—and dies!

Oh, awful seene! Does sudden judgment fall?

What means this gloom? The earth’s convulsive
throes

Attest her horror at this monstrous crime!

Most fearful portents! Dreadful mysteries!

Earth shudders! Rocks are rent! The very graves
Give forth their dead!—yet not to joyous life.

Their bodies, in their cerements of death,
Like gliding ghosts appear. Their trembling friends,
Awe struek, and pale with fear, see once loved forms,
Like warning spectres, broken of their rest!

And hark! The strange report from lip to lip,
“The Temple vail,” which hides the holy place,
Is rent in twain! untouched by mortal hands!

The Roman captain now exclaims at last,

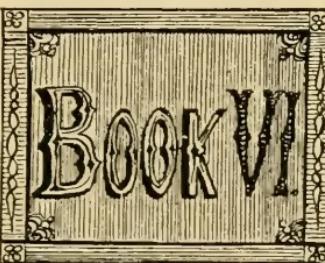
“Truly, this was indeed

THE SON OF GOD!”

“*The heart * * * desperately wicked.*” Jer. xvii. 9.

“*Crucified the Lord of glory.*” 1 Cor. ii. 8.

VICTORY OVER DEATH..



I am the Resurrection
and the
LIFE .

John Els

PROEM.

Grant me the victory, O Lord ;
For victory is thine.
Speak thou the all-commanding word,
And thine is also mine.

I ask a triumph more sublime
Than warriors e'er could win,
O'er all the vanities of time,
O'er Satan, death, and sin.

Poor Alexander wept, at last,
His soul unsatisfied ;—
His reign and triumph quickly past,
Vanquished, in shame he died.

His conquest of the world was vain.
His soul was still it's slave.
“What profit all the world to gain,
And fail the soul to save ?”

But Christ subdued beneath his feet
The last of all his foes.
Thou, Father, owned his work complete,
When, conquering death, He rose.

O God, may this great joy be mine
To triumph like my Lord ;—
With Him, in thy bright smiles to shine,
And share his blest award.

This victory o'ercomes the world,
E'en faith, my Lord, in Thee,
Who Satan from his throne hast hurled,
And made believers free.

The unbelievers still may cling
To darkness, doubt, and sin ;—
His choice can no true comfort bring,
Nor make him pure within.

But whoso trusts thy word of truth,
And makes thy will his choice ;
His soul shall have perpetual youth,
And o'er all foes rejoice.

BOOK SIXTH.

The Sabbath passed, the day of holy rest,
Which brings rich benedictions on its friends.
They truly "call the Sabbath a delight,"
When privileged to turn from earthly care,
And hold communion sweet with God and Heaven.

But ah! This Sabbath, unlike all the rest,
Could bring no peace to sinners or to saints,—
"No peace is to the wicked, saith my God."
How could pure heavenly peace descend on those
Whose guilty spirits bore more damning stains,
Than Abel's blood, e'en of their murdered Lord?

All day a shadow rested on the courts
Of God's most holy Temple, dark and deep,
A shadow of an awful mystery,
That filled the very souls of men with gloom!
Deepest and darkest 'twas in hearts of priests!
The sacred vail that hid the Holy Place
Hung, as on yesterday, when rent in twain
From top to bottom, yet without a hand!
The sacred mysteries were thus unvailed
To common eyes. But who could understand
The mystery beneath this awful portent vailed?
It pressed their hearts as with a dreadful load.

Mechanically they fulfilled the rites,
The sacred rites that spoke of peace with Heaven,
Through sacrificial blood! But ah! the blood

Which rested on their souls could bring no peace,
Though “speaking better things than Abel’s blood;”
To all receiving it in faith and love.

The One Great Sacrifice, that saves from sin,
Brought deeper doom upon their guilty souls!

E’en to the souls of those who loved the Lord
Peace was a stranger all that woful day.
Their hearts dwelt in the sepulchre with him
“A high day,” hitherto, that day had been,
That followed close upon their paschal feast,
A day of thankfulness and holy joy,
But now, though “Christ, their passover, was slain,”
They had not learned how life springs from his
death.

This last sad Sabbath of the ancient law
Into the Gospel Sabbath now dissolves,—
Day of new hope and overflowing joy,
And revelations rich of grace divine!

Our waking thoughts turn to The Crucified!
Thus may they ever turn, with deepest love,
And may the glad surprise of that blest day
Be oft repeated in believer’s hearts.

“To them that look for Him He will appear.”
So let us look! Not with a hasty glance
Diverted from some all-absorbing care,
But yielding all our fondest thoughts to Him.
Oh, may his love glow warmest in our hearts,
And may our lives be “hid with Christ in God.”

O glorious day! Day of celestial joy,
Outshining all the days of Earth's sad life!
O morn of heavenly rapture! Earth itself
Smiles with the light, and peace, and bliss of Heaven!
O Earth, lift up thine eyes, so dim with tears,
Familiar long with sorrow, sin, and death.
Now let thy throbbing heart burst forth with joy!
Sing out the praise of thy triumphant friend!
Let Heaven rejoice! Ye angels, tune your harps!
Ye harps, that long, with plaintive sweetness showed
The sorrows deep of God's Beloved Son,
A mourning pilgrim through the shades of death,
Cast off your weeds! Tune all your notes afresh,
To most exultant, glad, triumphant strains!
O glorious Conquerer of sin and death,
All hail! Thy strong right hand, thy holy arm
Alone hath gotten thee the victory!
All hail! For thou hast triumphed gloriously!
Sin could not touch Thee! Satan could not quench
The heavenly fire of pure and holy love,
That burned serene, amid the whirlwind rage
Of foul ingratitude, and hellish hate!
Nor could dark death affright or hold Thee bound!
“Captivity itself is captive led!”
Burst are the bars of death! the triple bars,
Forever prisoning Love and Hope with life!
Henceforth fair Hope sings sweetest o'er the tomb!
Her dearest treasures lie beyond its doors!
Blest “immortality is brought to light!”
And love no more in hopeless anguish sinks,

Despairing, midst the charnel dust, to die,
Nor turns to starve on empty memories.
With rapture she uplifts her yearning heart,
To yon bright world where Christ has led the way.

Strangely the Lord's disciples all forgot
His wondrous promise for this third day given.
But Heaven, more mindful, at th' appointed hour,
Sends forth an angel to unbar the door
Of gloomy death, before his mighty Lord,
And Christ, the Lord, stronger than death itself,
Shakes off his chains!

An earthquake's dreadful shock
Denotes the deed. The angel now descends.
The stone which closed the door, guarded and sealed,
He rolls away! Behold him sitting there!
“His face like lightning! raiment white as snow!
The keepers tremble, falling down as dead!
And Christ comes forth! but lingers near the spot,
To wait and greet the children of his love.

At earliest dawn, with fond impatient haste,
The women seek the holy sepulchre,
And bring sweet spice to embalm the sacred dead.
But sweeter spices filled their tender hearts,
Of pure and heavenly love, whose fragrance rose,
As holy incense to the courts above.

’Tis Mary Magdaléné, “first of all,
“While yet ’tis dark,” who hastens to the tomb.
“Much had she been forgiven, and much she loved.”

Astonished she beholds the open tomb!
The broken seal! the great stone rolled away!
And, turning quick, she flies, with trembling haste,
To tell, with deepening grief, the startling news,
That e'en the grave is rifled of its dead!

Peter and John, at once, with burning hearts,
Fly to the sepulchre to learn the truth.
They find it empty. But the linen clothes
Remain, with napkin, wrapped each by itself.
What can it mean? Deep wondering they depart.
But Mary stands without the tomb, and weeps.
Stooping, at length, she looks within. And lo!
Two white robed angels sit where Christ has lain!

“Woman, why wepest thou?” say they.

“Because”

Says she (more full of this new bitter grief
Than terror),

“They have ta'en away my Lord;
And where they may have laid Him I know not.”

Ah! Desolate indeed each loving heart
Whose Lord is hidden thus. But unbelief
Would gladly hide him, gladly seal his tomb,
So that he ne'er might rise, gladly deny
The Lord when “risen indeed, yea, e'en forbid
Each christian hope, so hiding its own guilt.

Turning, she sees her Lord, but knows him not.
And Jesus asks,

“Woman, why wepest thou?”

She answers,

“Sir, if thou hast borne him hence,
Oh, tell me where. I’ll take Him then away.”

“Mary!”

Saith he. And now she knows her Lord!
Oh, what a flash of joy, like sudden light
Upon the deepest gloom, thrills all her soul
Turning again,

“Rabboni!” loud she cries,
Ready to fall and clasp him by the feet.
But he forbids, commanding,

“Touch me not.”
“Not yet ascended,” there would still be time
To give a loving weleome e’er he went.
She first should comfort those who “mourned and
wept.”

Searce had she gone, when other women came,
Still questioning one another “who should roll
The mighty stone away?”

But lo! ’tis done!
Those sorrowing souls who seek their Lord with
fear,—

The Lord to them once dead, but now desired,—
Oft dread a barrier far beyond their strength,
But when they come, the stone is rolled away!
They enter in, but find an empty tomb!
Astonished and perplexed they stand, when, lo!
Two angels, clothed in shining robes, appear!
They bow in fear, their faces to the ground.
The angels utter words of joy and hope.

“Why do ye seek the living 'mong the dead ?
He is not here, but risen as he said.
Come see the place where our dear Lord hath lain.
He goes before you into Galilee.
There shall ye see him, as he said to you.”

Yet scarcely have they left the sepulchre,
Ruining amazed, filled full of fear and joy,
With trembling feet, and palpitating hearts,
When lo! The Lord Himself stands in the way!

“All hail !”

He cries. But prostrate at his feet
They fall all terrified.

“Be not afraid,”

He says. And suffers them to clasp his feet.

“Tell ye my brethren.—go to Galilee.
There shall they see me.”

Only glimpses here,
A little while, are granted to a few.
In Galilee, his loved and chosen home,
He purposed for a season to sojourn,
And show himself e'en to the multitude.

Yet even here, upon this very day,
A seeming stranger, he appears to two
Travelling afoot; and, at the journey's close,
Reveals himself a moment, and is gone.

They hasten back to tell the wondrous news.
The others also tell that Simon too

Hath seen the Lord! And then with wondering hearts

They all recline to take their evening meal,

When, lo! before them all, distinct and clear,

The Lord appears to their astonished eyes!

They recognize his dear familiar form,

And face, so full of gentle dignity,—

His brow so badly scarred by cruel thorns!

And yet they look with fear, and painful doubt.

He spreads his hands! Behold! The deep red scars!

He speaks! How sweetly!

“Peace be unto you!”

Yet now, convinced that no mere vision vague,

But that a living spirit hath appeared,

Still more affrighted, yea, e'en terrified,

They view, with trembling, their beloved Lord.

“Why are ye troubled? Why do thoughts arise?

Behold my hands and feet, that it is I!

Yea, handle me and see! For flesh and bones

No spirit hath, such as ye see me have.”

At this they crowd around their cherished Lord,

And trembling rapture follows quivering fear.

They scarcely now believe for very joy!

Death's dread realities, burnt in their souls,

Make this blest vision seem a happy dream.

To make assurance sure and chase their doubts,

He asks them,

“Children, have ye any meat?”
They turn them now to their forgotten board,
And bring him thence broiled fish and honey comb.
Lo! He participates before them all!

Thus, by the most “indisputable proofs,”
He shows himself as truly now alive,
As, late, they saw him pierc'd, and cold in death.

Yet proofs beyond all reasonable doubt,
Those who deny his truth as Son of God,
And hate the humbling doctrines of His cross,
Will still resist, and seek to break their force.
Behold the men, whose hate remembered well,
And understood his promise to rebuild,
Within three days, the temple they destroyed,
How carefully their zeal made sure his tomb,
With ponderous stone, and seal and Roman guard!
Yet with the witness sure of such a band,
Of Christ's triumphant vict'ry over death,
Incredulous, they still pursue their course,
And bribe the soldiers to report a lie!

But dost thou cry,
“Incredible, such guilt!”
Nay, so, in every age, ungodly men,
Who hate the holy precepts of their God,
Unwilling to receive the truth in Christ,
Reject the clearest, strongest evidence,
But grossest falsehoods circulate and trust!

We bless the Lord, whose thoughtful care hath laid
 Foundation strong on which our faith may rest,
 To build, with confidence, immortal hope !
 As islands in the Southern Seas are reared,
 Through lengthening ages, from the lowest depths,
 Emerging finally to light and air,
 So these foundations for our dearest faith,
 Through depths profound, of darkest mystery,
 Of patient sorrow, suffering, toil, and shame,
 Rose to the light of this triumphant day !

Blest day ! Memorial sure, from age to age,
 Of resurrection triumph of our Lord,
 And finished work, complete in righteousness !

“God blessed the Sabbath Day, and hallowed it,”
 When first creation’s mighty work was done,
 So, this day, resting from his greater work,
 By which he made atonement for our race,
 By bearing sorrow, suffering, sin, and death,
 Christ, by his resurrection, blesses it
 With richer blessings e’en than those of yore.

No new enactments need his loving friends
 To sanctify the day (and none could make
 Unwilling servants keep it as they ought) ;
 But ne’er could words or mere enactments give
 Such preciousness, and happy sacredness
 To any day, as crown this Day of days !
 Christ sanctified the day by his own act,
 And by example his apostles showed
 His holy will, in honoring this day.

'Tis called by His own name, and set apart
As His own day. His loving friends rejoice
To keep it holy to their risen Lord.
But those who serve Him not, in love and faith,
Must still be bound by law, of God or man.
'Tis clearly shown that human nature needs
One full day's rest in seven, from worldliness;
And he who rests not wrongs his fellow men,
Endangering a privilege so dear,
While, even more, he wrangeth his own soul.

Some, by the letter, more than spirit, bound,
Are bound in spirit by the ordinal.
But where 'tis said God "*blessed the SABBATH DAY*"
We find a word far broader than "the seventh."

Alas! If that alone were sacred time!
Who could be sure which were the holy day?
The Gospel teaches greater liberty
And Jesus bids us

"Judge ye what is right."

But holy liberty (not license loose,
To mere ungodly pleasure) now is ours.
And he who keeps "the Lord's Day" holy now,
Fulfills the spirit of the ancient law.
Yea, e'en the letter too he well fulfills;
For this blest Sabbath is the jubilee!
The glory of the ancient Sabbath fades
Into this greater glory. One day now
Serves as memorial of the works of God,
And points to greater glories yet to come.

Thus we remember now the Sabbath day
To keep it holy after week of toil,
Anticipating too, with speechless joy
The resurrection and the endless rest!

Six happy weeks Christ lingered here on earth,
To fill the hearts of those who knew his love
“With joy unspeakable, of glory full.”
Oh, who can sound the depths of wondering love,
And reverence most profound, and pure delight
That opened in their raptured souls the while?
For now no clouds of ignorance remained,
Or mists of doubt, to hide their Saviour’s face.
They knew him surely then as all divine.

Earth seemed no longer common earth to them,
A place of common business, hopes, or joys.
It rather seemed their soul’s sweet trysting-place,
Where they might meet their well-beloved Lord;
And pledge their hearts, in holy happy love,
And, for a season hold communion sweet,
And learn his will to do while lingering here,
Till summoned home, in brighter realms above,
To hold the marriage supper of the Lamb.
E’en the reproach of love was sweeter far,
Than absence, fickleness, or cold reserve.

Thus Peter found, though grieved, and justly shamed,
When Christ the third time asked him “Lov’st thou
me?”
‘Twas still his joy that Jesus sought his love,

Unworthy though he felt that love to be;
And Christ himself still prized poor Peter's love,
And deemed it, though in weakness thrice disgraced,
Far better than the cold indifference
Of those who loved the world, nor prized his love.
Thrice re-affirmed, it grew, henceforth, in strength,
And flamed, in triumph, on the cross at last!

* * * *

At length the Lord his great commission gave,
The work he wished his friends henceforth to do.
And said,

“Now go ye forth to all the world,
And preach my gospel unto all mankind.”

Oh, blessed work! ’Tis thus that Christ conveys
To souls yet lost in ignorance and sin,
The wondrous blessings purchased by his death.
The treasures of his grace he now commits
To “earthen vessels,” that the excellency
Of power might be of God and not of us.”
He makes us all “co-laborers with him,”
In this blest work to save our fellow men.

Oh, noble work! It dignifies our lives!
'Tis worth our living! Worth our dying too!
'Tis blessed to redeem the lives of men,
From dreadful thraldom 'neath the powers of sin,
To “glorious liberty of Sons of God,”—
To ransom souls doomed to eternal death,

To make them heirs of life,—the “*heirs of God
And e'en joint heirs with Jesus Christ*” our Lord!

Ye who have felt the patriotic thrill,
Whose hearts have leaped to hear the trumpet call
That summoned you to arms to meet the foe,
And drive the invader from your country’s soil,
Oh, list a nobler call!

It sounds from Heaven!

It calls you to more glorious, blessed work!
It summons you to save your fellow men!
Love ye your country? Love your Saviour too!
And love the “better country” of our hopes!
Flock to the standard of the “Prince of Peace,”
And help to bear his glorious banner forth! . . .
Our foes are strong. We would not hide their force.
Wide their dominion! Terrible their power!
With bitter bondage they enslave our race!
“We wrestle not ‘gainst” puny “flesh and blood.”
We war “‘gainst principalities and powers,”
‘Gainst wicked spirits, throned in places high.
But mightier far is our triumphant Prince,
The chosen “Captain of the Lord of Hosts!”
Already Victor, over Death, and Hell,
He leads us on to certain victory!
God speed his kingdom! May its bounds extend
To Earth’s remotest shores! May every knee
Soon bow with reverence at his holy name,
“Of things in Heaven, on Earth, and ‘neath the
Earth,
And every tongue confess that He is Lord,

E'en to the glory of our Father, God!"

Oh, mighty work ! Naught but a power divine,
Could give it good success in sinful hearts,
Could dissipate the dreadful midnight gloom
Of Satan's stolen empire o'er the Earth,
And new create a world so dead in sins !
'Twas in the reign of black chaotic night,
The Spirit, brooding o'er the empty deep
Evoked the universe from formless void.
First light responded to the mighty voice,
And then creation rose, so wondrous fair!
Oh, fairer, far, than Venus from the foam !
But clearer yet the light of Gospel truth
Shines through the deep and hopeless gloom of guilt.
And fairer still the *new creation* springs
E'en from the dust of spiritual death !

God's Spirit only can perform the work.
The sons of men, like dry and scattered bones,
Are destitute of all redemptive power,
And e'en the meaning of *true life* know not.
Our prayer must be,

“Come from the skies, O Breath,
And breathe upon these slain that they may live !”

God's Word alone can bring true life to light.
Where else could hope arise for sinful men ?
The lips of Nature, sealed by God's own curse,
Now mute henceforth, no word of promise breathe.
The sons of men, born to rejoice in God,

And recognize His voice, through all His works
Disabled now by sin and unbelief,
Can scarce discern true Deity itself.
Their very sense and manhood they degrade.
Set in a godlike place above the beasts,
They fall below, make beasts and stones their gods,
And bow to idols formed by their own hands!
Or, vainly puffed by false philosophy,
They fondly fancy and would fain believe
Blind Nature, without God, evolved herself!

But still men question,
 “Why does God not speak
In more familiar, and convincing tones?
For then,” say they, “we would and must believe.”

So said the Jews. “Let him but now come down
From yonder cross, and then we will believe.”

Vain words! For, though he condescended not
To unbelief, still more triumphant proof
He gave to holy faith. O'er death itself
He showed his power, and life beyond the tomb!

And yet his foes invented then a lie
To hide the truth.

 And now dost thou still ask
Why God doth not still show himself to men,
Compelling all men to receive his words?
The answer, plain, is,

“*Man's apostasy.*”

God could not put this honor on his foes,
And bless them with a filial privilege.
Were men like angels, pure from inborn sin,
This privilege and joy would still be theirs,
To stand in God's bright presence, and to hear,
As in the garden once, his charming voice.
Such privilege is, now, not e'en desired!
For now men's hearts are wedded to the world,
To them the creature all; Creator naught!

But, in his love, and condescending grace,
“God, dwelling in the high and holy place,”
“Reveals himself to humble, contrite hearts;”
“To them that look for him he will appear;”
“Those who obey will know his doctrine true;”
“God's secret is with them that fear the Lord;”
“The wise shall understand;” “the pure in heart
Shall see the Lord;” and those are truly blest
Who “meditate his word, both day and night.”

We “thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven, and earth,
That thou hast hid these things from worldly wise
And prudent men, revealing them to babes.”

Only to those who seek the Lord in truth,
He shows his grace and makes his beauty known.
Our Mighty Maker condescendeth not
To curiosity, or stubborn pride,
Or proud presumption of rebellious minds,
Wise, in their own conceit, above their God.
But oh, how graciously he still invites,

"Come unto me! Ye heavy laden, come !
Learn ye of me. Your souls shall then find rest."
"Ask, and ye shall receive! Seek ! ye shall find ;
Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

O thou who scorn'st the wisdom given to faith,
Which looks most wisely at the things unseen,
Why boast, so loftily, of reason's power?
"Canst thou, by thine own searching, find out God?"
Or canst thou bring the Almighty to thy terms?
Wilt thou then blame thy Maker? charge neglect
Or lack of wisdom in withholding truth?
Search thine own conscience! Must thou not confess
Thou hast not yet obeyed the truth, most plain,
Commanding love supreme to God himself?
How then canst thou complain he has not made
The truth more plain? or made thee learn more
truth
E'en now, by what is known, thou'rt self-condemned!
Would greater knowledge serve thee. more than
faith?
Ah, not mere human knowledge pleases God,
But meek submission to his holy will!
And faith from which all true obedience springs.
Faith is the essence of obedience,
For faith's true essence is the *choice of God*,
And choice of all the soul's chief good in Him.
A wilful unbelief enthrones self-will,
And sin, and folly!—dreadful trinity

That bar out every ray of saving truth,
And bind the soul, that else might seek its God !

How else can we approach him bnt by faith ?
Or God impart himself to human souls ?
'Tis clear that God "reveals himself to faith,"
And faith alone receives his will revealed.
Faith is the highest wisdom of the soul.
The man of genius may be most a knave,
And most a fool, in fighting 'gainst his God ;
The most unlettered man, both saint and sage.

God's holy wisdom now appears in this,
That "when the world by wisdom knew not God,
(Not e'en his oneness and omnipotence;
Although "the things invisible of him
Are clearly seen," by signs most manifest),
It pleased him "by the preaching of his word
To save those that believe."

Proud disbelief

May scorn the method, and despise the Word,
And call it "foolishness," devoid of power.
Its power is seen, e'en now, in souls redeemed,
In minds enlightened, hearts made glad with hope,
And "purified by faith," and warmed with love,
In passions fierce subdued, in fears dispelled,
In tempests of the soul made calm in peace,
In lives reformed, and changed, most wondrously,
From curses, into blessings to mankind.
In feet turned upward from the downward way,
And mouths, once dumb, or filled with foulest sin,

Now sweetly, purely, tuned to praise the Lord.
Nay more. Beyond the circle thus most blest,
Are widening circles, where its power appears.
Nations its purifying influence feel.

Crime learns "to hide its foul diminished head."
E'en worldly blessings come with christian faith,
And worldly men, for streams of mercy here,
Have cause to praise the Gospel of our Lord.

But more than all "It is the Power of God"
To full salvation, and eternal life !

* * * * *

* * * * *

Behold we now the last great scene of all.
Upon the Mount of Olives Jesus stands,
To bid the last farewell to loving friends,
And rise, triumphant, to his heavenly home.
Important moment ! Joy and grief combine
In every loving heart,—divinest joy,
To see and share a triumph so sublime,
Such viet'ry o'er the last great enemy,
And glad translation to the bliss of heaven,—
But also grief, a desolating grief,
That made the Earth seem empty, and forlorn !
Ah ! What can fill the dreadful aching void,
When he is gone who once has filled our hearts,—
Yea, filled our lives, with light, and joy, and love ?

But, turning from the grief of earthly friends,
He rises to receive his welcome home !

Oh, glad triumphant welcome, home to God !
Such triumph never conqueror won on Earth,
Such joy, perchance, has never reigned in Heaven !

O Earth ! What strange indifference is thine !
Unconscious of his advent, even now
Thou neither know'st, nor carest where he goes !
How couldst thou share his triumph ? Thou didst
share

The awful guilt of compassing his death !
Ah ! Had some hero of thine own returned,
All stained with blood of slaughtered fellow-men,
To claim, at home, his triumph and his crown,
What pomp and splendor ! what exultant noise
Of gathering multitudes, elate, and proud,
Curious the mighty hero to behold,
Would hail the sight of his triumphal car !
And yet what emptiness of hollow sounds !
Of false professions, weak, and worthless praise !

But Christ receives a triumph greater far
Than men could give, with all their pomp and noise !
For oh, what gladness fills the hosts of Heaven,
To hear the news of their dear Lord's return !

And oh, what rapture fills the soul of Christ,
As fades the scene of all his shame and woe,
And Heaven's bright glories dawn upon his view !
Clouds upon clouds fill all the vast expanse,
From zenith unto nadir, East, and West.
But bursting through, lo ! yon celestial light,

A perfect flood of radiance, pouring forth
As from the very throne of light and bliss.

Nor solitary grandeur awes the soul ;
For life, as well as light fills all the scene !
Oh, yes ! The very highest forms of life,—
Not like the swarming, crawling life of Earth,
So full of venom, selfishness, and sin ;
But life celestial, worthy of the name,
All pure and lovely, as the azure sky,
And glowing warm with fire of holy love.
Angels, archangels, seraphs, cherubim,
Flashing with varied hues of splendor bright,
All join the general joy, to hail their king !
Down from the heavenly heights, with joyful haste.
They fly to meet him on his upward way !
Hark ! How their loud, and rapturous acclaim
Rings through the heights of vast creation's dome !
O slumbering Earth ! Art thou too deaf to hear ?
Wilt thou not join the universal joy ?
'Tis thine own Lord, whose triumph they proclaim !
His glorious victory is also thine !
Thine Advocate, Redeemer, Saviour, Friend,
Triumphant o'er thy deadliest enemies,
Ascends and “ captive leads captivity ! ”

Ring on ! Ye sweet toned bells of Heaven ! Ring
on !

And all ye instruments of heavenly joy,
Sound forth your loudest notes ! Ye pearly gates
Throw wide your portals to receive your King !

Your voices sweet, ye happy angels join,
In most triumphant, most ecstatic strains!
Join, O my soul, in thine unseen retreat,
To echo back these raptures of the skies!
O beating heart, keep time, with love and joy!
Oh, wondrous harmonies, sublime, and sweet!
Did Heaven itself e'er hear such thrilling strains?

Behold! The shining hosts have met their Lord!
And see, reflected in his glorious face,
Their glad emotions, joy, and love, for love!
But now He looks for other greetings still,
E'en tenderer, and dearer to his heart.
Behold yon beauteous company approach,
The blest and happy children of his love.
Their robes were washed in his most precious blood.
White as the driven snow they now appear.
Their hearts all beat in unison with his.
Unutterable joy, and boundless love
Fill every soul, yea, love unspeakable.
Yet is its language known from heart to heart.
And sweeter sounds than flow from souls redeemed
Were never heard before in Heaven itself!
They too have triumphed over sin and death,
But gained their vict'ry through their Captain's
blood.
These are but part of Jesus' ransomed host!
What shall the grand and final gathering be?
But one more welcome, better far than all,
Awaits the glorious Victor over sin!

Oh, bliss beyond the depth of finite minds !
The Father's welcome to the Son he loves !
Alas, but for a moment we may see,
E'en in our yearning thoughts, the things of God.
The light of earth seems commonplace and dim,
And serves to hide the splendors of the skies.

* * * * *

We gaze astonished up the azure vault
Where our dear Lord triumphant took his way !
A moment since in happy converse here
(We held our breath to catch his every word),
He spoke to our enraptured hearts of things
“Pertaining to the kingdom of our God,”
And then He raised his hands to bless, when, lo !
Caught up, a cloud received him from our sight.

And now the very cloud is all dissolved.
Heaven shows no sign ! Serene her field of blue.
As ere she snatched the treasure of our souls.
Alas ! How cold, to fondly yearning hearts !
Her very beauty, gloom, to those whose eyes,
All dim with tears, are yet untaught to look,
With patient faith, and sweet expectancy,
Beyond the veil, where Hope's strong anchor lies.

Yet mourner, gaze with us. Your loved, and lost,
Was dearer far to God, who made his own,
Than e'en to your fond hearts. And God recalls
The loan of earthly life from those he loves
To call them home, more fully to endow

With true, inalienable life in Heaven !
Yes, gaze with us. The Heaven that seems to smile
So coldly on our momentary grief,
Smiles also in ineffable delight,
Eternal in the Heavens. Oh, look not down
Where Earth received that cherished vanished form.
He is not there, “whom God has taken home!”
But look above where Christ hath gone before
Oh, may we all “be with him where he is!”
Better, oh, better far! than dwelling here,
Where Antichrist usurps his rightful throne,
And sin and sorrow share their reign with death.
But Jesus has a service for us here,
And so, like him, we wait our finished work.

Till then “we walk by faith, and not by sight,”
And fix our hearts and hopes “on things above.”
Where Christ doth sit beside the throne of God.

* * * * *

But dost thou still prefer to walk by sight,
And proudly say, “To see is to believe?”
Consider well the nature of thy choice.
'Tis not the falsity of things unseen
Which hinders feet that willingly would tread,
With patient steps, the upward hea enly road,
Nor yet the weight of evidence that draws
The hearts of men away from things unseen.
'Twere worse than brutish folly to affirm
That only things by mortals seen are real,

And scarcely less to deem the things here seen
More real than God, the Maker of them all.

“The invisible things of him are clearly seen.”
The weight of evidence would e'en constrain
Reluctant feet to walk the way of faith.

Why then this choice of baseless unbelief?
And what the inward nature of the choice?
'Tis plain 'tis not the choice of evidencee
Compels the soul to turn from things unseen.
The forcee lies in the soul. A heavy weight,
Of worldliness, ungodliness, and sin,
Draws it from God, from Heaven, and holy things,
And makes it gravitate like lead to Earth!

The strength of evidence would bear us up,
As water buoys up the swimmer bold.
But unbelief heeds not this buoyant forcee,
With suicidal folly plunging deep
Into the dark and unknown depths below ;
And faithless cowardice sinks out of sight,
E'en by its misdirected efforts drowned.

The soul to heavenly aspiration roused,
Views all things beaming in the light of God.
The sight of heavenly glories lifts it up
In holy contemplation towards the skies.

Yet worldliness scarce glances towards the stars,
But quickly banishing all lofty thought,
Grovels in grossness, vanity, and vice.

The choice determining to unbelief
Is choosing earthly good instead of God.

But shall we call that good which clogs the soul,
Which blinds it to its heavenly destiny,
And cuts it off from God, and good divine?
A sinful unbelief calls evil good,
Good, evil, calling its own darkness light,
And deeming dark the light of God's own truth.

We ask again. What is a choice like this?
'Tis not mere guiltless difference of view.
'Tis rank *rebellion, folly, heinous sin!*

Shall subjects dare despise their King's decree,
Recalcitrating e'en at just commands,
Which they themselves acknowledge right and good,
Yet justify themselves by blaming him
For things not clear to their contracted view?
With all his messages the King doth send
Credentials true which faithful souls discern.

Uncertainty implies the soul's neglect,
The spirit too, of disobedience.
But disobedience could be justified
Not by mere doubt alone, but certainty,
Most clear and absolute, of wilful fraud,
Against the truth and purpose of the King.
What poor excuse of special points of doubt
Can justify a choice preferring doubt,
Preferring things forbidden by the King?
The patriot soldier, faithful, true, and good,
Enlisting freely in his country's cause,
Is scarce in danger of the foe's deceits.

A watchful sentinel, alert, and wise,
He shuns all parley, scorns all compromise,
Obeys his captain's orders from his heart.
But he whose heart inclines him to the foe,
Who serves reluctant, with divided heart,
Or, self-indulgent, sleeps upon his post,
Will fall an easy prey to cunning foes.

The Lord's disciples now, henceforth, must walk,
Not by the sight of their incarnate Lord,
Nor by dead works, nor empty forms, or words,
But by a living faith in Christ their Lord—
By living union to a living head.
Christ was a season known in human flesh,
“Yet now, henceforth, we know him thus, no more.”

“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye here,
Still gazing into Heaven? Your Lord will come
In manner as ye now have seen him go.”

Thus said the angels to the wondering souls
Who saw their Lord translated to the skies.
And with this blessed hope they now returned
To do the work committed to their hands,
Preparing for the coming of their Lord.

But first they wait, according to his word,—
“Tarry ye here, yet at Jerusalem,
Until endued with power from on high.”

“This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our
faith.” 1 John v. 4.



TRUE LIFE
FROM THE
SPIRIT.

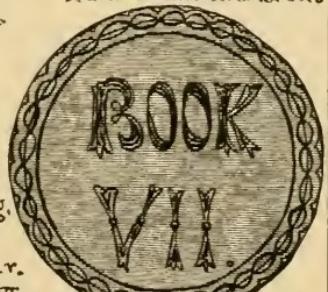
Life
MILITANT
and
TRIUMPHANT.

He went
forth
conquering,
and
to conquer.

Rev. VI. 2

Come hither, I will show thee
the Bride, the Lamb's wife.

Rev. XXI. 9.



PROEM.

Spirit of grace and power Divine,
Inspire my sluggish soul:
Oh, may my wayward thoughts be Thine,
To move at Thy control.

Thine be my hands, to do Thy will,
My lips, to speak Thy praise.
And may Thy blessed presence fill
All my remaining days.

Oh, purge my sinful, selfish heart.
Endue it with Thy grace.
The fullness of Thy love impart.
Make it Thy dwelling-place.

Oh, may Thine influence never cease,
Descending from above;
Fill me with holy, heavenly peace,
With all-embracing love.

“Thy gentleness hath made me great,”
In union. Lord, with Thee.
Such greatness, for my chief estate,
My high ambition be.

Be this my constant pleasure, Lord.
To do Thy pleasure here,
My fear, to lose Thy holy fear.
My gain, Thy great reward.

Be this my sweet yet anxious care
Thy work with zeal to do,
Thy burdens cheerfully to bear,
Thy joys each day renew.

Though eyes may yet ne'er view thy face,
May I behold Thee near,
And feel Thee, in my soul's embrace,
Beyond all else, most dear.

BOOK SEVENTH.

All glorious is the light of literal day,
Grand is the natural scenery of earth,
And full of splendor night's sublime array,
But far more glorious shines the light of God,
Along the track of earth's sad history,
Through all the gloom of human sin and woe!
Egypt, The Red Sea, Sinai, Jordan too,
Beheld the power and faithfulness of God,
When gloriously He triumphed o'er His foes,
And fearfully rebuked His people's sins.
The mountains quaked, and trembled at His voice,
Giving His oracles in thunder tones.
And all the people bowed their heads in fear:
The night grew pale before the fiery cloud,
That vailed the awful presence of her king:
Heaven furnished angel's food for sinful men,
Yea gave them flesh to eat when they complained,
Yet vengeance entered in between their teeth:
The desert rock poured forth cool limpid streams,
Yet there e'en Moses, sinning, found his doom:
And in the tabernacle's inmost shrine
The glory of the Lord dwelt day and night,
But woe to him intruding there to gaze:
In splendor from the holy Temple's courts
(Whose solemn rites impressed each soul with awe)
The daily sacrifice was offered up,

And blood most freely flowed for every sin :
So death walked, daily, hand in hand with life.
The holy law, sent for the life of man,
“ Proved unto condemnation and to death.”
It drove men helplessly to fall on God.
To plead His mercy full revealed in Christ.

And yet the ministration e'en of death,
Of written ordinance, engraved in stone,
Was full of glory, solemn pomp and power,
And full of hope sublime for holy souls,
Who found, through it, the righteousness of faith.

But that which thus was glorious to the eye,
Or inward sense of majesty and power,
“ Has now no glory ” to the sons of God,
“ By reason of the glory that excels,”
Viewed by their inmost hearts and ransomed souls;
For far “ more glorious ” God’s amazing love
Shone through His Son—His all transforming grace,
Imparted by His holy Spirit’s power.

The Spirit’s reign with wondrous power begins.
Instructed by their Lord to wait that power,
A little band of plain unlettered men
(Whose mission to evangelize the world
Were, else, but folly arrant, arrogant)
Assembled in a memorable place,
The promise of their Father to receive.
That “ upper chamber in Jerusalem ”
Will e'er be held a dear and sacred place,

Though now long “numbered with the things that were.”

Made consecrate to God by prayer and praise,
‘Twas also blessed by His own Spirit’s grace.
For lo! ‘tis shaken by a mighty wind,
And cloven tongues of flame descend from heaven,
Resting on every head;—and every heart
Doth burn with holy fire, with fear and love,
And joy unspeakable!—and every tongue
Is loosed to speak the praises of the King.

Thus, ever since, the chosen ones of God,
Who love the seeret place where Christ is found,
In happy fellowship of prayer and praise,
Enjoy, oftentimes, the rapture of His love.
He who in truth doth seek will find Him there,
According to His word,

“Where two or three
Are gathered in my name, there I will be.”

Gather then truly in the name of Christ,
Ye who, in truth, believe and love your Lord.
Be not ashamed to own His Holy name;
And, if ye prize the riches of His grace,
Seek them with happy expeetation too.
Oh, gather not with dead and worldly frames.
Meet not the best beloved of your hearts,
With cold civilities and empty forms.
Let not mere duty bring you to His feet.
Antieipate the sweet and sacred hour.
Prepare yourselves e’en as a happy bride

Adorns herself, and tunes her heart with joy,
To meet the cherished bridegroom when He comes.

Then He will meet your souls with love and power,
Power to resist and overcome the world,
And power to work great wonders in his name.
Such power no earthly force can e'er confer.

Yet e'en mechanical familiar powers
Have wondrous force. Behold a single man
With serew and lever 'neath yon edifice
With patient labor lift its weight immense,
Whose thousandth part would crush him in its fall.
With power like this Archimedes proposed
(With stand and fulerum given), to move the world !

But mightier far, and far more wonderful,
The power to move a world of fallen men,
Conveyed in fact and not in fancied dreams,
To plain unlettered men of Galilee !
Yes, theirs it was to move the souls of men,
Not move, by inehes, solid forms through space,
(The lower office given to soulless force),
But lift men up, from depths of sin and shame,
To heights of holiness, towards God and heaven!

The power bestowed is God's almighty power,
Which power alone could loose proud Satan's yoke,
(Magician foul who now mankind enthrals)
Dissolve the great Enehanter's dreadful spell,
Quieken men "dead in trespasses and sins,"
And make them truly free and living souls. -

'Twould take a prophet's ken and angel's pen
The hist'ry strange of Christ's dear Church to tell.
Bride of His love and matchless tenderness,
For whom He freely shed His precious blood,
She follows in the thorny path He trod,
With steadfast heart and bruised but patient fee
Familiar with the taunts and buffetings,
And cruel malice of a Godless world.
Behold, alas! the streams of holy blood
That sealed the Bride's devotion to her Lord !
Ah ! Does He love her not ? why suffer, then,
Satan to wreak his vengeance on her head !
But is this fair one, burdened so with grief,
Thus left to labor through the wilderness,
The Bride, indeed, belovéd of the Lord ?

Yea, dear; as Jesus to the Father's heart,
His chosen bride is to the Lord Himself
But He by suffering proved His love to her.
So she proves hers. Yet not by needless woes,
In bringing into glory many sons,
The Father made His Well Beloved Son
A perfect Saviour e'en by suffering dire.
And so, in bringing in her sons to life,
The Bride must suffer. Yet 'tis for her good.
The chastening of the Father, "grievous" now,
Shall afterwards bring forth the blessed fruits
Of righteousness to those thus exercised.

But stranger still the follies, sins, and crimes
Committed in the name of Christ's chaste Bride,—

The bloody persecutions, wicked wars,
And gross iniquities of deepest dye,
So counter to the will and word of Christ,
Grieving the Lord, and all who love his cause.

These deeds were scored as victories for Hell,
And, at the tidings strange, all Hell rejoiced!
And wicked men, and infidels rejoiced!

Contrast, with this, sweet christian charity,
“Rejoicing not in” base “iniquity,”—
“Rejoicing in the truth.”

But unbelief,—

Which fain would show that righteousness is wrong,
That love of God is only selfishness,
And holy truth is falsehood in disguise,—
Rejoiceth e'en when truth is falsified!
Though virtue fail not, slander still may foul
The name it hates,—the Holy Church of Christ,—
And when the Devil’s children counterfeit
The form and features fair of Christ’s pure Bride,
And practise, in her name, foul wickedness,
(The proper fruits of unbelief itself)
It falsely charges all on Christ’s true Church.

The Churh of Christ is not a form of flesh,
Or mere conglomerate of fleshly forms,
Though fair the form, though splendid the array,
Though bound by righteous rules, or truthful creeds.
If life flow not from Christ, the living head,
'Tis but a corpse, or counterfeit, or mask,
Concealing fraud, corruption, sin, and death.

Christ hath espoused a spiritual Bride,—
Its form invisible to mortal eyes,—
Fairer, oh, fairer far, in eyes divine,
Than loveliest daughter born from Mother Eve

Not yet, indeed, perfection crowns her brow,
Not yet “without a wrinkle or a spot,”
She shines among the fully sanctified,
Where Christ will soon “present her to himself;”
But growing beauty, growing life and grace,
The heavenly “beauties of true holiness,”
The loveliness of life and light divine,
Reflected from the face of him she loves,
Reveals her kinship to the Son of God.

Christ daily grants her new supplies of grace,
And so, from glory unto glory raised,
Each day she finds herself more like her love,
In his bright image more and more transformed,
“Even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Through all her members shines this light divine,
Unnoticed by the vain and busy world,
E'en as the stars of heaven, unseen by day.
With varying splendors shines each different star.
Some, with a light most dim, are scarce discerned,
Yet all compose a glorious galaxy.

No nation now, denomination, sect,
Or section of the outward Christian Church,
Can rightly arrogate this honored name,
Belonging only to the sanctified.
The Lord will scorn the vain pretence of all

Who claim this dear relationship to him
Because of rites performed, or holy hands
Imposed on graceless heads, or e'en because
They in his holy name "have prophesied"
And many "works most wonderful have done,"
But have not truly known and loved the Lord,—
"Have not his spirit, and are none of his."

To them the Lord will say,
 "I know you not!
Depart, ye workers of iniquity!"

The Bride of Christ, e'en now a glorious church,
Though yet invisible to carnal eyes,
Joins to her loveliness true majesty—
"Fair as the moon, clear as the noon-day sun,
And terrible," to all the sons of night,
As God's victorious and bannered hosts.
"The Captain of her Great Salvation" leads
Her glad triumphant course. The holy John,
In grand apocalyptic vision, saw
The symbols true,—"One riding on a horse.
Snow white, and going forth o'er all the earth,
Both conquering and to conquer!" Blessed Earth.
Whene'er the glorious conquest is complete!

The victories of Christ and his true Church
Are victories for poor humanity.
Behold, in contrast, those of bloody Mars,
The dreadful God admired by worldly men.
A blackened desolation marks his course!
A scene of horror meets our anguished eyes—

Of dire destruction, mortal agony—
A bloody plain strewn with the mangled forms
That once rejoiced in lofty human life.
And list! The dreadful groans, and shrieks of pain
Of those who languish on the verge of death,
The wails and lamentations, sobs and moans
Of those bereaved of friends as dear as life.
Behold the pleasant homes left desolate,
The wives and little ones, so happy once,
Now wild with grief, on whom the dreadful pall
Of widowhood and orphanhood descends,—
The melancholy trophies true of Mars!

Helpless to save, kind pity wrings her hands,
Oft pressing on her heart, to check the pain
Of swelling grief, now bursting through restraint
In scalding tears, and groans, and heavy sighs.
Such victories Mohammed's followers won,
The Arab hordes, the Turks, the Saracens.

But mark the progress of the Church of Christ.
Her victories are those of peace and love.
The very “wilderness is glad for her:”
The thirsty desert “blossoms as the rose.”
Wild pagan nations lay their fierceness by,
Their war-like weapons change to tools of peace,
(Their “spears to pruning hooks,” their “swords to
shares,”)

Receive the decent dress of Christian men,
And study useful arts and gentle speech.
The nations learn their common brotherhood,—
The universal fatherhood of God.

Sweet charity walks forth to bless mankind,
To feed the hungry, clothe the destitute,
To heal the sick, restore the blind to sight,
Reclaim the wand'ring, succor the oppressed,
To help the feeble, soothe the widow's grief,
And cause the orphan's heart "to sing for joy."

The law supreme, of Christ's true Church, is love
By this she gains her noblest victories,
Such victories as bless the souls of men,
Not robbing them of all that life holds dear,—
Yea, taking all,—brief earthly life itself,—
But granting blessings never known before,
Raising the dead in trespasses and sins
To truest life, sublime, without an end.

The Church of Christ the moral state upbuilds
Which infidelity and war destroy.
With patient prayerful labor she restores
The moral desolations they have wrought.

If honest, themselves, infidels confess
The outward blessings of the reign of Christ,
And own, that, should his principles prevail,
Millennial blessedness would soon ensue.
Dishonesty or ignorance alone
Denies the wondrous good the church has done.
Yet men, unwilling to obey the truth,
And enter into union with the Lord,
Plead this excuse, "corruption in the church."
Dishonesty, hypocrisy, and fraud
Sometimes infect the outward Church of Christ."

Is this an honest plea, ye upright souls
Who pride yourselves upon your honesty?
Or mere excuse, to hold aloof from Christ?

Poor human nature even when renewed,
Partaking of a nature all divine,
Shows not at once perfection like the Lord's.
The little seed grows not at once a tree.

And false professors gather in the church.
So parasites, oft clustering on a tree,
Share not its nature, neither bare its fruits.
What honest soul would therefore blame the tree?
That which is “grafted in” alone receives
The life which constitutes identity.
As well decry all progress, science, art,
Because of imperfections, or mistakes,
As Christ's true Church, because of parasites.

Oh, fair indeed the holy Church of Christ!
Rich her adornments! Dear her sacred courts!
For whatsoe'er most precious seems to man,
Whatever doth, or can, most bless his soul,
Of spiritual riches, social charms,
Or holiest affections, cluster there.

The fondest love, that is not sanctified,
Uplifted, and sublimed by grace divine,
Is but a natural instinct, soon to die,
That scarce exalts us o'er the animal.
But that enkindled by the love of God,
That which is by his spirit, “shed abroad,”

And finds its highest object God himself,
Unites the soul to God, and must endure
When earth has faded,—c'en while God abides !
The love of kindred, family, and friends
Becomes a high and sacred principle,
Whene'er the sacredness of souls is seen,
As objects of divine, redeeming love,
And heirs of holy, everlasting life.

Hope of a dying world! Fair Bride of Christ!
Kind Mother of the penitent and meek,
What heavenly riches dost thou bring mankind!
Our Lord, ascending, "gave his gifts to men"
Through thee, thou happy almoner of grace!

The nursing mother offers to her babe
A wealth of life and love, that later years,
With all their gold and silver, cannot buy.
So thou the richest spiritual gifts
Dost minister to souls new born through thee

For whatsoe'er is tenderest in love,
Whate'er most consecrate in time and place,
Whate'er is happiest in joy and peace,
Whatever most sublime in blissful hope,
Most sacred in the memories of the past,
Most comforting in times of pain and grief,
Most purifying in its influence sweet,
Truly refining in its inward grace,
Enlightening in its clear displays of truth,
Whate'er is grandest in the realms of thought,

Whate'er most true and beautiful in art,
Most sweet and touching in the breath of song,
All, all are found in thy sweet ministry,
Dear Spouse of Christ, Bride of the Dying Lamb,
Who loved thee best, and gave himself for thee!

And we, thy sons, would love thee more and more,
Thou gentle Mother, nursing us to life.
We feel a filial pride in thy dear name,
Thou Church of Jesus, slander thee who will,
Whate'er is noblest in the course of time,
From earliest era's of the misty past,
(Shining like stars of greatest magnitude
Through nebulous clouds of long forgotten names)
Whate'er most sure and grand in history,
Heroic in achievement, strong in faith,
Wisest and best in true philanthropy,
Patient in suffering, kind in thought and deed,
Unselfish in devotion, yea, in short,
Whate'er is most sublime in character,
Richest in blessings for the present life,
Grandest in promise of eternal good,
Closest uniting man to God himself,
And reaching all the noblest ends of life,
We find in thee! Illustrious Church of Christ!

Most venerable in antiquity,
More ancient than the oldest guilds of Earth,
Religious, social, or political,
Yet ever young and vigorous and fair,
Thou art the ever living Bride of Christ!

Dear Church of Christ! We love thy holy courts,
Where dwelleth still the honor of our Lord,
There, still, he meets his humble waiting friends.
Unseen, but loved with love unspeakable,
There still he sheds sweet influence of his grace,
Like subtle fragrance, delicate and pure,
And bringing healing balm to sin sick souls.

O sacred place, of grateful happy praise,
Of true, devout, and heart uplifting prayer,
Thou art "the HOUSE of GOD, the GATE of HEAVEN!"
There happy souls in heavenly places sit,
And feast on foretastes rich of Heaven above.
Worldly and unbelieving souls may scorn
The joy's they never knew, and cannot share.
Alas! How dead to all the things of God!
How deaf to all the harmonies of Heaven!

Yet some who call themselves the Lord's
Love not the place of prayer.

Is this thy case?

Dost thou from choice forsake this holy place,
Where Christ is pledged to meet with those he loved?
Carest thou not, O self complacent soul,
Who hopest, sometime, to attain to God,
And join the raptures of the Heavenly hosts,
Carest thou not to meet thy Saviour now,
To share his love and speak his worthy praise?
Needest thou not the blessings of his grace?

Consider thou the meaning of thy choice.
Dost thou prefer the fellowship of earth?

Or, when thou seem'st t' approach the living God
Dost thou seek not so much his promised grace
As intellectual benefit from men
Of learning or of eloquence of speech?
Or dost thou scorn the lowly fellowship
Of poor and humble children of the King?

O ye, who think ye truly love the Lord,
“Take heed lest any fail of saving grace.”
God gives the means of grace, and gives the grace,
When we, (who so much need), seek, by these means.
Those who despise the grace, neglect the means,
Or fail to use with earnest diligence,
Will surely fail. God will not be despised.

O wondrous grace! Of all the gifts to man
Most wonderful! Both in thy source profound,
The all wise thought, and righteous will of God,
And in thy mighty power on sin-slain souls.
To those who seek their highest good in Earth,
Or ignorantly seek an unknown God,
Thou art an unknown good. Concerning thee
Philosophers have long enquired in vain,
True “summum bonum,” highest good of man,
“Elixer Vitae,” sought by alchemists,
The fabled “fount of youth,” now realized!

That all pervading energy of life
Which animates this sublunary scene,
Mysterious in itself, but manifest,
In all its growth, all its activities,
Finds thee its highest form, its richest fruit!

The unbeliever may deny and scorn
The grace he does not know, much less desire,
The grace whose power would purge away his sin!
Searee more unreasoning is he who scorns
The All Creating, All Sustaining Power,
Who manifests himself in all his works.
Clear as the life appears in fruit and flower,
So God, the source of life, in life itself.

If thou must doubt, my unbelieving friend,
If God's credentials thou canst not discern,
Be modest in thy doubts. Dare not deny,
Because unknown to thee, what others know
By apprehensions clear as those of sense.
So men devoid of science might deny
The power of gravity, which holds us all
Firm to the Earth, or that more vivid force,
Th' electric shock, which he who once has felt
Through all his members, ne'er henceforth forgets.
Could'st thou convince him, since thou hast not felt,
That 'twas a thing unreal?—the idle freak
Of mere imagination, highly wrought?
No more canst thou, him who has known God's
grace!

Grace wins the greatest victories for God.
“ ’Tis not by might, by wisdom, nor by power,
But by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts!”
All seeming victories, without God's grace,
Only deceive the hearts of worldly men.
Learning, refinement, culture, art and wit,
Have all their share to elevate mankind,

But naught can save, but God's redeeming grace,
The social states of men devoid of grace
(The grace divine that purifies the heart,
And brings us into union close with Christ)
May still with human grace be beautiful,
With all things charming to the eye, and heart.

So churches thrive, throughout all Christendom,
“Which have a name to live, and yet are dead.”
Human and worldly virtues may abound,
Strict orthodoxy, zeal for truth and right,
A large benevolence, high etiquette,
And all “the small sweet courtesies of life;”
And art may bring her grandest, choicest, gifts,
To magnify and beautify the place,
(Where yet they meet each other more than God)
With lofty steeples, buttresses, and towers,
With nave and transept, vaulted ceilings high,
With fluted pillars, arches, capitals,
And windows rich with color and device;
Grandeur and beauty in perfection join
With wondrous architectural symmetry,
To lift the mind in high and happy thought,
Above all low, and mean, and petty things.
A gorgeous ritual, with its solemn pomp,
May fill the soul with reverence and awe,
And even transient ecstasy may thrill
The sensitive and earnest worshipper;
But what avails it all? What point is gained,
‘Gainst Satan’s empire o’er a godless world,
If God’s *redeeming grace* be wanting still?

Still children of the devil, all who scorn
 Regenerating, sanctifying grace,
 Which purifies the heart, which fills with love,
 And makes believers truly “sons of God.”

* * * * *

But dost thou ask, What progress now is made
 In human life? in Earth’s strange history?

Worldly historians in vain attempt
 By guesses shrewd, research profound and wide,
 Or learned philosophy of history,
 To solve the problem deep of human life,
 To trace its source, or show its noblest end.

Scorning the aid of Him, who made mankind,
 And from the first beginning knows the end,
 How could they else but fail?

’Tis God alone
 Appoints the highest destiny of men.
 He gives the secret in his holy Word.
 And he who seeks it at some other source
 Foredooms himself to failure and mistake.
 Too high do busy, worldly men esteem
 The *worldly enterprise* which fills their lives
 And constitutes, in their undue regard,
 The most important history of earth.

The greatest theme of history is *war*,
 At once the curse and token of our guilt.

But what of “holy wars?” These too attest
 The guilt of man and righteous wrath of Heaven.

“Avenge,” the Lord commands us, “not yourselves.”
“Vengeanee is mine, I will repay,” saith God.
And so “to magistrates he gives the sword,”
(An instrument of guilt in wicked hands)
And saith, “he beareth not the sword in vain.”
But not by war will Christ his kingdom build;
“Put up thy sword into its sheath,” saith he.
Not by the sword can grace and truth be given,
Or love be forced upon the human breast !

What benefits accrue to men from war ?
What are the fruits of all this cost and blood ?

A change of dynasties, and boundaries !
Alas ! One dynasty remains unchanged !
Proud Satan’s empire even grows with war !
The boundaries of sin are e’er enlarged !

The peaceful arts vie with the art of war
To claim supreme regard from worldly men.
The fine and useful arts with science join
To fill the vaunting page of history.

But naught so worthy each historian’s pen,
So hopeful for the highest weal of man,
As God’s own work in saving souls from sin,
Through his own Holy Spirit’s gracious power,
And through the ministrations of his church.
The progress of the kingdom of our Lord
Is full of highest hope for all the world.

Ah ! Grace hath grander viet’ries, far, than war !
Behold the glorious growth of grace and truth !
Christ’s Kingdom, “like a grain of mustard seed,”

Sown in the cold, ungenial soil of earth,
Where wintry barrenness and darkness reign,
And desolation, caused by reigning sin,
Where hungry birds of evil omen prowl,
All good to seize, devour, and destroy,
Was watched with tenderest love, and sleepless care,
Was fostered, vitalized, and nourished up
By bounteous grace! “Where sin abounded,” long,
Now, and henceforth, “doth grace much more
abound.”

“Westward the course of empire takes its way.”
Proud Babylon, that ruled the Orient,
Bows, humbly, to the Grecian conqueror;
Greece falls beneath the iron hoofs of Rome,
That “dreadful beast,” that “tramples and devours;”
Strong Rome itself obeys the Gallie power;
But England claims the empire of the seas;
And young republics rule the Western world.
Long may they rule, in amity and peace,—
Their principles prevail through all the earth.

E'en so the Kingdom of our Blessed Lord
Achieves its greatest triumphs in the West.
As Westward moves the sun in all its course,
(“His going forth is from the end of heaven,
His circuit even to the ends thereof,”)
Enlightening, warming, blessing all the earth,
So goes the glorious “Sun of Righteousness,”
With richer, grander blessings for the world.
Dark ignorance, and superstition flee,

Like shades of night before the smiles of day,
Barbaric nations bow before the cross;
Their pagan temples, foul with rites obscene,
Their theatres, all stained with human blood,
Where brutal crowds made sport of sin and death,
Their suttee pyres, and Juggernautic cars,
And all their forms of guilt and shame give place
To churches, schools, asylums, hospitals.
Ferocity and cruelty submit
To gentle influence of Christian love,—
A power more potent, far, than brutal force.
So winter's furious storms, and ice, and snow,
Yield to the breath of sweet and balmy spring.

Fraternal bonds unite the nations now,
In interchange of commerce, friendship, art,
That once met only on the battlefield!
Their boorish prejudice and tribal hate
Are changed to sympathy and warm esteem!

Not uniform, indeed, the progress made.
Proud Satan's strong dominion does not yield
Before mere menace of the Church of Christ.
Long warfare must be hers, sometimes defeat,
And dire disaster, after victories won.
Well knows the Tempter how to ply his arts,
Of slanderous lies and venom from without,
Deceit and foul corruption from within.
Well can he simulate the true and right,
“If possible, deceiving God's elect.”

He even turns defeat to victory.

Three centuries the Christian Church had moved
Straightforward in the very face of death.

Lo! Yonder phalanx moving to assault!
The "volleyed thunder," and the iron hail
Sweeping their ranks, like grass beneath the scythe,
Shake not their courage, nor repel their steps!
Hark! The response that stirs their valiant hearts.

"*Close ranks!*" the cry. "*Forward! to victory!*"

They close! With bayonets fixed and steady steps
They mount the breach, and plant their standard
high

Upon the very crest whence poured their death!

And so the Church, through fields of her own blood,
Through martyrdoms and persecutions dire,
Holding the banner high of love divine,
With shield of faith, and sword of sacred truth,
Her feet made beautiful with wings to bear
The tidings glad of everlasting peace,
Advances e'en to empire's topmost height!
Her leader sees upon the sky itself
The symbol of her faith emblazoned bright,
And, glad, the "*In hoc signo vinces;*" reads.

But scarce is faith enthroned with earthly power
Eve foul defection from the truth begins.

Ah, not in this world, Christ his kingdom claims.
Satan his opportunity discerns,
And works within the church, with treasons dark.

The churchward setting tide, of worldly men,
Brings worldliness, idolatry, and lies.
Ere this, philosophers had introduced
Their speculations strange, of mysteries,
The “gnosis,” falsely called, of things unknown.
Still, while the Word of God is held supreme,
Truth must prevail o'er all the lies of Hell.
But worldliness benumbs the truth itself,
And raises fogs, extinguishing the light;
Tradition takes the place of truth divine,
And gathering darkness overspreads the Church.
“Dark Ages” hold it long in Arctic gloom,
But when the Son of Righteousness returns,
With genial light and warmth of truth and love,
Winter, dissolving, yields once more to spring,
The happy spring of new abounding life,
Which leads in summer, with her fruits and flowers.
Rich fruits of gospel grace abound once more,
In Earth’s dark wilderness of sin and woe.
God’s Word of Truth, like seeds of precious wheat,
Long held in buried mummy’s withered hand,
Is sown once more, springs up and grows,
And widening harvests ripen for the Lord!

And higher art now speeds the mighty work.
Types vie with tongues to bear the tidings glad.
Thought finds new life, and truth employs new
wings,
And grace new channels to redeem the lost.
Fair science now enlarges her domains,
God’s wonders never cease. New wonders rise

To man's astonished and delighted view.
The ever widening breadths, and deepening depths
Of heaven's immense, illimitable realms,
Unfolding now to man's persistent search,
Reveal new worlds, yet hint of more concealed.
And so the hidden forces of the earth,
By science found, are utilized by art.
The flighty fancies of the fairy tales
Are made the sober facts of modern life.
Though leagues may separate familiar friends,
They still, with ease, their conversations hold,
And hear, with pleasure, each familiar tone!
Once more the sun obeys the will of man,
But bids the flitting shades of Earth stand still,
And binds expressions fleeting as a smile!
Man wills to soar above the very clouds,—
What power will serve? What strong mysterious
force?
He takes an element of air itself.
The imprisoned power is harnessed to his car,
And, scorning gravitation, bears him up,
To loftier heights than eagles can attain!
Perchance he fain would search the ocean depths,—
The parting waves roll harmless o'er his head,
And, safe among the monsters of the deep
He gathers treasures long forgotten there!
He hastens from land to land, from sea to sea,
With speed as on the pinions of the wind!
He even stores away his spoken words
In metal instruments devoid of life,

And at his will evokes each syllable,
With each peculiar cadence, rhythm, and tone
But what were all the progress made in art,
With all the best appliances of life,
Without true progress made in life itself?
The weightiest question yet remains for each,
Art thou, my soul, the nearer brought to God ?
Art thou the wiser, happier, holier grown ?
Art thou more truly filled with life divine,
(The truest life that mortals can attain)
And does that life uplift thy soul sublime
Above the vain pursuits, the carking cares,
And grovelling pleasures of the sons of earth ?
And dost thou find true pleasure in the Lord ?
Dost thou enjoy “his favor, which is life,
And loving kindness better far than life ?”
Beats thy whole heart in unison with his ?
And is the holy will of God thy will ?
Do all thy thoughts accord with his high thoughts ?
And art thou surely growing, day by day,
More in the glorious likeness of thy Lord ?
And dost thou make it e'en thy “meat and drink,”
To spread his name, and do his holy will ?
Oh, wondrous work !

To do the will of God !

This was indeed the great and blessed work
Wrought by his church through all the latter days.
This was the great commission of our Lord,
“Evangelize the nations.” “Preach my word
To every creature throughout all the earth.”

The glorious fruits of missionary zeal
Abounded through the earth in souls redeemed,
And made the trophies of amazing grace.

* * * * *

At length the seed time of the earth is o'er!
Seed time of truth, and spiritual deeds,
Of deathless souls, whose mortal forms were laid
In kindred dust, and in corruption sown,
The resurrection springtime waiting there.

The "Gospel of the kingdom" has been "preached
Through all the world and witnessed unto all."
The dispensation of redeeming grace
Has reached its end! The final day has come!
Tremendous day! What tongue can tell thy power?
What trembling hand record thy wondrous signs?

Not unpredicted, nor unheralded,
By signs and awful portents (seen by those
Who look for Christ's appearing, from his word).
Not unexpected or unwelcome comes
The day when Christ appears to claim his own.

But oh! To men of worldliness and sin
How sudden! Oh, how terrible it seems!
As thunder bursting from a cloudless sky
The summons comes to all the sons of men!
Oh fearful sound! O'erwhelming every sense,
With deafening power! Stunning the soul itself,

And to its centre shaking all the earth!
It is not thunder! Nay! Nor earthquake's shock!—
That long, loud, wailing, awful trumpet sound!

'Tis the last trump!!— Behold the opening graves!

Behold the dead arise! Oh wondrous day!

Forgotten generations spring to life!

And lo! In yonder sky, that sign of light!

Rejoice! Ye children of the king! Rejoice!

It is!

It is!

The signal of the Lord!!

The appointed signal of the Son of Man!

"Quick as the lightning shines from East to West!"

As brightly glorious too! He comes at last!

What consternation fills the sons of men!
The busy, hurrying crowds stand still aghast!
Th' unearthly light dims all the light of day.
The sun himself fades out! And every eye
Closes, unequal to the dazzling sight!
Closes forever to the things of earth,
With all its anxious cares, deceitful joys,
And business enterprises, great or small!

Now thought is forced a moment on itself,
Each man unto himself made known at last,
Conscious of standing in the sight of God,
Revealed in every thought in that clear light,
Which penetrates the inmost soul itself.

A ghastly paleness rests on every face!

'Twere vain to think of resue or escape.
Each for himself must stand before his God!
The dearest friend, parent or child, or spouse
Has no more claim! Can scarce demand the care
Of one who for himself accounts to God!
Alas! Who now can hide? In vain they cry,—
“The captains and the great men of the earth,”—
And call upon “the rocks and mounts to fall,
And hide them” from the searching eye of God,
And from the wrath of the offended Lamb!
Alas! Alas! The agonizing thought
That he should be offended, on whose aid
The soul should most depend for this dread hour!—
That, when the Son of God appeared on earth,
A sacrificial Lamb to purge our sins,
Rejected and despised by sinful men,
He pleaded for their love and trust in vain!
He pleads no more! No more extends his hands,
Pierced for our sakes, inviting men to come.
He stretches forth the sceptre of his power
To rule his foes, as with an iron rod.

But we who love the Lord see not their woe.
Caught up into the air to meet our God,
With lightning speed, like that with which he comes,
All earthly things fade quickly from our thoughts.
The dearest tie which bound us to the earth,
Dissevered now, we stand above the clouds,
Translated, yea transformed in every part—
Quick as a thought, “the twinkling of an eye,”

From mortal changed to immortality!
Oh glorious change! This! This is *life indeed!*
Celestial bodies now supply the place
Of those frail dying forms that once were ours,
Those weak and sickly tenements of clay.
Immortal vigor, buoyant life and strength,
Pervade our frames, breathe through each fragrant
breath.

Angelie beauty, dignity and grace,
With radiant charms, adorn each glorious form,
And spotless robes, of snowy whiteness, shine
As symbols of the purity within.
Fair were our forms before, though marred by sin,
And wonderfully made, though soon to die;
But infinitely fairer those bright forms
Which glide, like angels, through ethereal realms.
Yet fairer still our happy ransomed souls.
Inspired with gifts and graces all divine,
Made white, at last, through Jesus' precious blood,
With no more fear of sin or earthly taint.
Redeemed by him, we henceforth ever live,
In body and in spirit, like our Lord.
Now every fond affection turns to him.
Our bosoms burn with love, and loyalty.
At last, at last, with thrilling joy, we stand
Before our glorious Lord enthroned in light.

Now all the armies of the sky attend,
To graee His final advent to the world,
And all the myriads of the earth appear,
To hear the final sentence of their judge.

* * * * *

Now, O my soul, the final hour arrives!
Tremendous hour! To thee all ages looked
To seal with everlasting doom, the choice
Which every soul hath freely made in life.
Oh solemn hour! At last! At last! At last!

Behold, my soul, the Judge! Exalted high,
Amidst a brightness more than lightning's flash,
Whose all revealing power astounds the soul,
Yet shining with the steady blaze of day!

Behold the nations stand before the throne!
Behold! E'en now divided! Right and left!
Where art thou now, O trembling, fainting soul?
Tremble! And yet rejoice! Thou loving heart!
Since thou hast chosen life in Christ thy Lord,
Thou couldst not find the Faithful One fail now!
Rejoice! Oh yes, rejoice with speechless joy!
With rapture more than angels feel! With bliss
Which happiest mortals never could conceive!
Already thou art found among the blest!
At Christ's right hand!

Hear thou his own sweet voice!

What solemn silence waits the words of doom,
Which hearts and consciences already speak,
Already spoken by the Lord, long since,
In warning propheey, in faithful love.
Hark! O my soul, the welcome works at last!
"Come! O ye blessed of my Father! Come!
Inherit now the realms prepared for you,

Before the first foundation of the world!
For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat,
And I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink,
Naked, ye clothed, sick, or in prison cast,
Ye visited and ministered to me.”

We ask, “O Lord, when did we this to Thee?”

With wondrous condescension he replies

“ For inasmuch as to the very least
Of these my servants ye have kindness done,
Ye did it unto me!”

At this our hearts

Leap up with impulse of peculiar joy,—
Not selfish triumph merely, not the thrill
Of gratified desire in joys of sense,
Nor hope of income of eternal bliss,
Nor mere escape from just eternal doom;
But joy that Jesus, in his members felt
The little kindnesses we did for him!—
Yea that He even condescends to speak
As if *He owed a debt of gratitude,*
For our poor feeble acts of faith and love!

It was indeed the privilege of some
To minister in person to the Lord.
Their loving ministry He'll ne'er forget.
They shared his grief when exiled and despised.
But oh what joy, that e'en to us he owns
An interest in the same dear debt of love!
And now he bids us all a weleome home!

Not as mere convicts scarce escaping Hell,
But blessed children!—of His Father blessed,
For His dear sake, and loved for deeds of love!

Oh had we now the opportunity
Once more, in brief but earnest life on earth,
To prove our patience, gratitude, and love,
And simple childlike faith to recognize
Our Elder Brother in each child of Christ,
What double diligence would mark our lives!

* * * * *

But Oh what woe is thine, thou sinful soul,
Who findest now thy place at Christ's left hand!
Alas! Thou didst not choose true life on Earth!—
And now the last faint glimmering hope is gone!

But hark, The voice of everlasting doom,
More full of fear and woe to sinful men
Than thousand thunders, shaking all the earth!
Piercing the inmost soul! Oh hear the word
From Christ the Judge, the solemn word

“Depart!”

Oh dreadful word, that banishes from God!
But passed on those, who, by their godless lives,
Bade Christ depart, pronouneing their own doom.
Oh dreadful was the woe of Adam, once,
When driven from Eden to the World's wild wastes.
But whither, now, shall banished souls depart?
What home or refuge wait them? What reward?
Oh hear the words that fright all godless souls
Far more than banishment from God.

“ Ye cursed, into everlasting fire,
For Satan, and his angels now prepared!”

And yet God’s judgment now doth stand approved,
E’en by the inmost souls of those condemned.
They have, themselves, fixed their eternal state,
By fixing their own “characters” in sin.
(That ancient word describes their lasting work,
Not written, but “engraved,” as if in stone
Yea “in the fleshly tablets of the heart.”)

They cannot alter, if they would, the doom
Engraven there. The hearts that felt, unmoved,
The strong constraint of Christ’s amazing love,
E’en by his gentle Spirit’s power brought home,
Can ne’er be changed to love by judgments now.
Yet only love could make e’en Heaven blest,
Or e’er enable men to taste its joys.

The only fruit of God’s revealing light
Is now to make their shameful folly clear,
And point the darts of self accusing thought.
Oh dreadful sequence of a single sin,
Beginning first in unrestrained desire,
And ending in deliberate choice of wrong,
And wilful mutiny ’gainst sovereign right!

But ransomed souls in Heaven can no more sound
The depths of hopeless woe, than souls condemned
Can e’er conceive the heights of heavenly bliss.
Oh heights sublime! Where Christ himself reveals
His glorious loveliness to those he loves!
He bids his banished children welcome home!

He shows himself a Father now indeed
And folds us in the refuge of His arms.
Oh home of rest! Above all care or strife,
Forever inaccessible to sin!
We find Thee, Lord, the “Spring of all our joys,”
And know the meaning of thy words on Earth,
That thou didst come that we might all “have LIFE,”
And “have it more abundantly,” in Thee.

And thus we learn that “in thy presence” bright,
And only there, “is fulness of all joy;”
“At thy right hand are pleasures evermore.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Rev. iii. 21, 22.



Come up
hither, and I
will shew thee

Post-
script.



things which
must be
hereafter.
Rev IV, 1.

POSTSCRIPT.

Millennial glories dawn upon our sight.
But how depict the blessed reign of truth,
The universal prevalence of peace,
With righteousness, and piety, and love?
When none need "teach his neighbor, "Know the
Lord"

"For all, from least to greatest, well shall know,"
And for a thousand years the saints shall reign,
In union intimate, with Christ their Lord.

But how will Christ his coming manifest?
And how this glorious era usher in?

To us, we must confess, it is not given
Minutely to unfold these outward things,
The form and circumstance of Christ's approach,
When God doth overthrow his enemies,
And "bring in universal righteousness.
But this we do, with confidence, affirm,
Old Earth, and earthly natures still remain ;—
The final consummation is not yet.
Christ's kingdom still is one of faith and grace,
And, when the Tempter comes, he still finds men
Are peccable, and may be tempted still.
Not all are children of the King.
And there are nations yet to be "deceived."

Let us observe the glorious day's approach.

Behold the triumph of the Spirit now !
Long working patiently with little fruit,
But now with wondrous power to save mankind.
“Nations are born as in a single day.”
And Satan’s kingdom totters to its fall !
The hearts of men are stirred as ne’er before.
Momentous questions burst from every lip,
With eager, vehement, impatient haste.

“Cometh He yet? And is his Kingdom nigh ?
Tell us O watchman! Tell ! What of the night?”

The wakeful watchman mystic answer gives,
“The morning cometh ! Also cometh night !”

Morning to all who wait eternal day,
And hopeless night to those who hate the light.
Ah! Worthless now seems all the trivial news,
The empty gossip of an idle hour,
The various contests of a worldly crew
For pleasure, wealth or notoriety,
When Heaven’s all conquering King is just at hand.
Yet warfare wages now before unknown,
A universal, spiritual war.
The Dragon wars, with all his angels dark,
To hold their trembling empire ’gainst the Lord.
And Michael and his angels also fight.

Great judgments overwhelm all stubborn foes.
The Wondrous “Stone,” “cut out without a hand,”
The Living “Rock,” “the Strong Foundation Stone,”

The same “rejected by the rulers once,”
“Rock of Offence, and Grievous “Stumbling Stone,”
To all “who stumble at the word of God,”
On which are broken those who stumbling fall,
And ground to powder those on whom it falls,
This Rock of Ages smites upon the feet
The image of the Babylonian’s dream,
And Babylon, the Great, in ruin falls.
O Babylon! Thou cruel enemy,
In every age, of God’s afflicted church!
Usurper foul, of our Immanuel’s throne,
The shattered image shows thy ruin dire!
The gold and silver, brass and iron fall
In common ruin, e’en as scattered chaff
Driven by the wind from summer threshing floor.
O Babylon! For thee the sad lament
Of merchant princes, kings, and craftsmen rise
In wails of hopeless woe.

“Alas! Alas!

That mighty city! In a single hour
Thy splendor, wealth, and power have come to
naught!”

Hoary with age and stained with martyr blood.
Centre of art, and priestly pomp, O Rome,
Thou art the centre of this Babylon.
Thy sister cities throughout christendom
Share in thy fall, and join thee in thy woe.
O Babylon of worldly hopes and joys,
And worldly enterprise that most employs
Gold, silver, iron, brass, clay, stone, or wood,

Wherewith to make thine earthly empire strong,
But careth naught for truth and life divine,
Whose chosen temples are the theatres,
The forum, and the legislative halls,
The caueus chamber, club room, or exchange,
Or dens of vice where vilest men resort,
Thy long appointed hour has come at last!

Smitten of Heaven, the stubborn foes of God,
Whom mercy could not win, by judgment fall.
The Earth is purged of willing dupes of Hell,
And Satan's throne is overturned at last.
The Tempter foul is bound a thousand years,
No more to tempt the nations till the end,
And now the Gospel flies through all the Earth,
As if proclaimed from loftiest heights of Heaven,
By mighty angels, sounding trumpets loud.
Now all mankind must lend attentive ears,
Great multitudes receive the word with joy,
And Jesus has a willing people now,
In this the day of God's almighty power.
The Word of God (increased and multiplied,
As in the early Pentecostal day)
Has now "free course." "It runs:" "is glorified."

Oh gloriously the blessed Lord doth reign,
And every knee doth bow, and tongue confess,
"Of things in Heaven, on Earth, and 'neath the
Earth,
That Jesus Christ is Lord!"

Oh glorious day

Day of unutterable joy to all
Who love their Lord, and pray “Thy kingdom
come,”
When Christ doth come, with resurrection power
Into the very souls so dead in sin,
And raise them to a life like that of those
Who witnessed for him once with martyr blood.
Nay it is said that e'en the martyrs too,
Who lived not half their lives, but died for Christ,
Are raised, to share in his millennial reign,
As living witnesses to all the world.

But who the wonders of this age shall tell?
This glorious harvest time of God's own word ?
Ah! meagre, through the ages, were the fruits
Of righteousness, and truth, in human hearts;
And infidels declared the Word of God,
And Christ's atonement for a sinful world,
A failure, if designed for all mankind.
And yet this fact proclaimed the humbling truth,
So solemnly affirmed, of man's sad fall,
And consequent apostacy from God.
But now the Lord himself is “satisfied,”
With harvests from the travail of his soul.
Now horrid war wastes human life no more.
Fraternal love, and peace, and righteousness,
With Christian fellowship prevail through Earth,
And “fleshy lusts, which war against the soul,”
No longer lure their millions down to death.
The dreadful power that Satan held so long
To rule, corrupt, and ruin thoughtless men,

By morbid appetite for poisonous drink,
Is broken now. And men no longer say,
To justify a self indulgent course,
Which countenanced and pandered to this power,
“Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Cain’s own words)
But nobly speak the sentiment of Paul,
“No more I’ll make my brother to offend.”

Once even Christian men were sore deceived
By this most subtle of the Tempter’s arts.
E’en when most innocent, the gift of Heaven,
And “making glad the hearts” of godly men,
Wine was employed, as Father Noah knew,
To cheat the senses, and to shame the soul.
Then, danger chiefly lurked in gross excess.
But as of old, in Eden, Satan saw
His vantage ground, to lure man to his fall.
So in this subtle, most deceptive power,
Hid in th’ alluring, merry, festive cup,
Which good men loved, whose praises poets sung,
And saints defended from the Word of God,
He found his chief enchantment, sly and strong,
To cheat, enthrall, and slay the souls of men.
So added he his deadly poisons too,
And new concoctions, cunningly devised,
With power not only to intoxicate,
But rivet fast the bonds of sin and death.

So, many perished by this foul device,
And others, stronger in their self restraint,
Declared their course was safe and innocent.

Can that be innocent which hinders grace,
Gives aid and comfort to the enemy,
And, by example, louder far than words,
Assists the Devil to enthral mankind?
Nay! Innocent indulgence grows a sin,
Whene'er it aids the growth of vice and crime,
Or breaks the blows which else might slay the foe.

But now the Lord doth reign in righteousness.
“The ravening wolf dwells, harmless, with the lamb,
The leopard lieth down beside the kid,
The calf, young lion, and the fatling too”
Are found together, and a little child
Leads them in safety, peace, and amity.

And so it comes to pass that at the end,
When this long, fruitful age is o'er,
Unnumbered multitudes are gathered home,
“Of every nation, kindred, people, tongue,”
“To stand before the throne, before the Lamb,”
“With white robes clothed, and palms within their
hands,”
Ascribing their “salvation to the Lord,
That sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

But human nature still remains defiled.
The curse is not removed. Man's inbred sin,
(Without the Tempter's arts) still gives its taint
To every living soul from Adam born.
The bane which grew in strength while Satan
reigned,

Not e'en the grace of blest millenial years
Can quite eradicate from human hearts.
The one transgression sends its baleful power
Through ages, to the very verge of time!

What wondrous lessons show the power of sin!
It crucified the Saviour of the world,
And even where his holy name was known,
And men professed their faith, both in himself
And in the great salvation wrought by him,
They still preferred the tainted joys of sin!
And e'en when Satan's rule is overthrown,
And long millennial ages prove the power
Of truth and piety to bless mankind,
Some still prefer the joys of sense and sin.

So, when the Tempter comes to ply his arts,
When "loosed a little season," ere the end,
Great multitudes are easily deceived,
And thus "led captive by him, at his will."
Once more he claims the empire of the world!
Oh wondrous height of devilish power and art!
Oh wondrous depth of human sin and shame!
So rapidly the foul defection spreads,
That while the righteous perish from the earth,
(As in the days of Noah), godless men
Are multiplied, and almost all the world
Receive the Tempter for their guide and king.
(So rallied oncee, the warriors of Franee
Around their Hero, when from exile turned,
He sought, a few days more, his empire lost).

And thus must be fulfilled the Saviour's words,
That when the Son of Man doth come at last,
"Findeth he still true faith upon the earth?"
A little kingdom still remains his own.
True hearts are gathered at Jerusalem,
Whence first his truth began to bless the world,
And Satan wills to conquer even here.
And so with art the nations he deceives,
And gathereth Gog and Magog to the war.

Behold the closing act of human guilt,
The final blow of Hell's most desperate spite.
Earth long has been her chosen battlefield,
But Satan's arts have all been tried in vain.
Each cunning stroke of lies and foul deceit
Has quick recoiled, and ended in defeat.
Though Adam fell, a second Adam rose,
A Samson mightier, far, than all his foes,
Able his people to redeem and judge,
To bring new liberty from bondage vile,
Sweetness from foul corruption and decay,
Rich nutriment from all-devouring jaws,
And victory from dire defeat and death.

The worst and deadliest assault of Hell
Was smiting Christ, God's well beloved Son.
Nor dared she do the awful deed herself.
O men! Ye were her blind and wicked tools!
The tools of Hell! to work her foul designs
Against your sovereign! 'gainst incarnate love!
Yea, 'gainst your own supreme, eternal weal!

Oh dark, and deep, and dire the plots of Hell!
Oh dreadful her dominion over men!
But deeper still, in mystery profound,
Th' eternal plans of our Omniscient King!
The darkest schemes of all the powers of night,
Revealed in light to his all piercing eye,
Are foolish, weak, and vain!

“Why do ye rage,
And counsel take, together, 'gainst the Lord?
And 'gainst his Son, anointed Priest and King?''
The Lord derides your impotent attempts!
Ye but fulfill his wise and just decrees!
The Lamb of God ye slew was given by Him,
To purge, by blood, the sins of guilty men,
And thus redeem them from the power of Hell!
Oh wondrously the glorious grace of God
Was brought to view by foulest acts of Hell,
And justicee, too, that could not even spare
God's only Son from shame and grief and death!
And so the tangled web of wickedness,
Long wrought, with hellish art, in darkness deep,
Will justify, at last, God's ways to men!

But now the end draws near! Full victory
Seems just within the easy grasp of Hell!
Amazing sight! The wretched sons of men
Swarm 'neath the standard of their deadliest foe!
Alas! How quickly fallen men forget
The benefits received from patient Heaven!
As in that land where Joseph reigned of old
“A generation rose that knew him not,”

So now a people rise that know not Christ.
As once before the flood, God's cause declined,
Till ancient faith had almost died from Earth,
So now, millennial saints are almost gone.
"Now human nature loud asserts its guilt
When unregen'rate, and unsanctified,
Naught can restrain its plunging downward course.
Untaught by Earth's old history of woe,
Or that of ages of millennial bliss,
Untaught by Christ's own coming to the Earth,
First to atone and then to reign in joy,
The sons of Earth are on their idols mad,
And scorn and hate the least restraint of Heaven!
Glad they attempt to do their king's behests,
And rid the earth of all the sons of God.

Now Satan boldly throws off all disguise.
Oh art most wonderful to thus deceive
The sons of men, and arm for such a war!
Now, art aside, he trusts to violence!
He thinks to whelm the city of our God!
Here Satan stakes his empire of the world!
One more assault! He hopes to reign supreme!
Unnumbered hosts from every land and sea,
Assembled on the face of all the land
To crush the saints left in Jerusalem!
O Heaven! Behold the God defying hosts!

Yes! Heaven beholds! And from her lofty height
The fire of God descends! Oh dreadful sight!
More fearful, far, than Sodom's awful fall!

The windows of the skies, now opened wide,
Pour forth a flood more fierce than Noah knew,
A lurid sea of roaring, flaming fire,
Kindling the whole vast atmosphere of Earth,
Takes "vengeance now on those that know not God
Obeying not the Gospel of our Lord!"

Here ends the weary tale of earthly guilt.

Now on his Great White Throne our God appears!
Before whom Earth and Heaven both flee away!
And now before him stand both small and great.
And earth and sea give up their ancient dead,
And men are judged according to their works.
The "books of God are opened, and the names
Of all the dead recorded there are seen!
" And every one, whose name cannot be found
Long written in the Book of Life, is cast
Into the Lake of Fire, the second death!"

THE END.

"*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.*"—Eccl. xiii. 13.

"*His commandments are not grievous.*"—1 John v. 3.

"*This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another;*" as he gave us commandment.—1 John iii. 23.

L'ENVOI.

May God forbid that we our hopes should stay
On empty wishes, fancies most absurd,
Or promises that with the earth decay.
But may our faith, built firm on God's sure word,
Abide when earth itself shall pass away.





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